THE

Spiritual Warfare:

Or, some

SERMONS

Concerning

The Nature of *MORTIFICATION*, together with the right Exercise and Spiritual Advantages thereof.

Whereunto are added other two *SERMONS*, concerning the Mystery of *CONTENTMENT* under *afflicting Rods, and pinching Dispensations.*

The serious study of both which subjects is very seasonable at this time, wherein the Lord by his Dispensations is eclipsing all our worldly Comforts, and thereby calling us to *Mortification*, and to *Silence* under smarting Rods.

Being the Substance of Ten *Sermons.*

By that eminently pious and faithful Servant of *Jesus Christ*, Mr. *Andrew Gray*, Minister of the Gospel, whilst he lived, in the City of *Glasgow.*

Col. 3. 5. *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth.*

Gal. 5. 19. *Now the works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, &c.*

Ephes. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6. *But Fornication, and all Uncleanness, let it not be so much as once named amongst you, as becometh Saints:* ver. 4. *Neither Filthiness, nor Foolish talking, nor Jesting,* &c.

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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·

Good Reader,

THere are two things which every one that ſets his face towards Heaven ought to be prepared for, and reſolved upon, to bridle his Luſts, and bear Afflictions; both are tedious to Fleſh and Blood: But a Chriſtian is not to mind the trouble of the Fleſh, but the ſaving of the Soul: The Apoſtle Paul ſpeaketh of putting on the armour of Righteouſneſs, both on the right hand and the left, 2 Cor. 6.7. We are aſſaulted on every hand, and therefore we muſt be armed on every hand: The Pleaſures of Senſe entice & pleaſe our Luſts, and therefore we need Mortification; Croſſes, and Afflictions diſturb the quiet repoſe of our minds, as they retrench our Intereſts; and therefore we need Patience and Contentment. The Apoſtle Peter bids every one that would be a compleat and entire Chriſtian, to adde to Temperance, Patience, 2 Pet. 1. 6. Temperance belongeth to Mortification, for it is an holy moderation in the Uſe of all Earthly things, and Patience breedeth Contentment, in the want of them. Alas, if we want either of theſe Graces, we ſhall be as Ephraim, a Cake not turned, baked but on one ſide, but quite dough on the other; even Heathens ſaw a neceſſity of this Συζυγία, or Combination; thence that Sentence of Epictetus, ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου, Bear and forbear; bear Afflictions, and forbear vain Delights. Both theſe Graces ſpring from one root, and are much enforced by the ſame Conſidera-

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tions; *When we once learn to despise the* Afflictions of the world, *our Affections to the* Delights *thereof dye by consent. And on the other side the* Mortified man *will certainly be the* most contented: *If our* Affections *were dead to these things, our* Afflictions *would not over greatly move us. All this is spoken* (Reader,) *to introduce thee into the serious perusal of these* two *Treatises of* Mortification *and* Contentment; *One of which I have read, not without some* Pleasure *and* Profit, *and suppose the same holy strain will be found in the other also. They were both Preached by an hopeful instrument of God's glory in the Church of* Scotland, *but snatched from an unthank-ful world, in the very flower and freshness of his Youth, dying (as I am informed) ere he arrived to the* 23th *Year of his Age. That which first induced me to look into these Treatises, was another Tract of his about* Neglecting the great Salvation, *which taking up casually in a Family where it was; I soon found it the product of a lively, savoury spirit; The Lord bless these and other good Books to thy edification; I am*

Thine in the Lord's work,

Thomas Manton.

THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

SERMON I.

Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?*

When the Sword of the Juſtice of God was coming down upon us, then our bleſſed *Lord Jeſus*, in the infinite depth of his unſearchable love and compaſſion to ſelf-deſtroying ſinners, cryed forth with a lowd voice, that Juſtice might hold its hand; and as the Ram ſacrificed for *Iſaac*, ſo was he willingly content to be *caught in a thicket*, and to become a ſpotleſs and everlaſting Sacrifice for ſinners. He was content to be bruiſed, that ſo we might paſs free, and his Father's hand might be turned upon the little ones. But, notwithſtanding *he hath died for our ſins, and riſen for our righteouſneſs*, yet hath he given to all his followers a

Spiritual Warfare to accompliſh, ſo that they ſhould be continually taken up in contending *againſt Principalities and Powers, and Spiritual Wickedneſſes in high places*; or, (as the words are rendered by ſome, we conceive more appoſitely) *in heavenly things.* And certainly, there is no diſcharge in this War, neither any interruption while we are on this ſide of Eternity: We confeſs God might eaſily have ſerved an Inhibition on all our Spiritual enemies, that they ſhould no more oppoſe themſelves againſt a Believer after Juſtification; but *He* in the depth of his unſearchable wiſdom, and (we may ſay likewiſe) infinite love towards his own, hath ſo contrived their way to Heaven, that thorow many afflictions and tribulations in our Spiritual Warfare, we muſt enter thereinto: It is much indeed for a Chriſtian to die a Victor after War, though not a Triumpher; that muſt come after death, and the Trophies and Rewards of our Victory, ſhall then be fully given to us, when our feet ſhall ſtand within the gates of the new *Jeruſalem*, and when we ſhall receive theſe two glorious and everlaſting Badges of our Victory, *a Crown ſet upon our head*, having this written upon it, *It endureth for ever.* A Motto which could never be engraven upon any Crown here below; and *a Palm put in our hands*, and then indeed ſhall we ſing, as thoſe that divide the ſpoil, when we have led Captivity captive, and ſitten down upon a Throne which is eſtabliſhed for ever. And we conceive much Divine reflection and holy Contemplation upon that precious recompence of reward, and that high and unconceivable pitch of dignity unto which Believers and Overcomers are to be advanced, would make us with much chearfulneſs and alacrity undergo this Spiritual Warfare. And yet all our tryumphing is not ſuſpended, till our War be ended; believe me, there is more real joy in the victory over, and the vanquiſhing of one of our luſts, yea more Divine ſatisfaction, in a ſerious purſuit and contending with them, though with very ſmall ſucceſs to our apprehenſion, than in the actual enjoyment and fruition of them all. Thou maiſt hide ſin under thy Tongue now, and have

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it pleaſant to thy Taſte, yet at laſt it ſhall be as the gall of Aſps, and the poiſon of Dragons. O Believer! Put on ſo much holy Generoſity and ſpiritual Ambition, that though Satan ſhould offer unto thee all the Kingdoms of the World, that thou may fall down and worſhip him, thou maiſt cry forth in holy zeal and indignation, *Get thee behind me Satan*; O! that deceitful *Rhetorick* and malicious guile wherewith he enſnareth immortal Souls, and brings them into ſubjection. O! but the depths of Satan are ſubtile and great; And he is a man of underſtanding that can draw them out, and not be ignorant of his devices; And except we be helped by the Candle of the Lord, that diſcovereth the inward parts of the Belly, to know theſe myſterious ſubtilties of him, whoſe name is, *A Deceiver*, they will remain ſtill riddles and myſteries to us.

But ſince we are compaſſed about *with this body of death*, and *there is a law in our members rebelling againſt the law of our mind*, we ſhould be much in groaning for the day of our Redemption, when the lawful captive may be delivered, and the prey taken from the mighty, and that bleſſed Decree may come forth, *O priſoners of hope, go forth and ſhew your ſelves.* We are afraid that the Chriſtians of this Generation, have proclaimed a Ceſſation of Arms, and have concluded a Treaty of Peace with their luſts, and a League not only offenſive, but (ſhall I adde this) even defenſive; not only, that we ſhall not offend our luſts, but ſhall defend them: and if once we have ſealed this Treaty and Agreement with our Idols, What can they require more at our hands? We conceive, we may ſadly allude unto that word, that there is not one amongſt forty thouſand in *Iſrael*, with whom there is a ſpear and ſhield ſeen in contending in this holy Warfare. O! Can ſuch a Deluſion as this overtake you, that ye can be an Overcomer without fighting; Is your ſtrength greater than thoſe that have gone before you, that you think you can accompliſh this War in one Day, and purſue your Enemies till you overtake and conſume them? O! When ſhall that day

be, when we ſhall be groaning forth dayly this mournful Ditty, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?*

In the words we conceive firſt, there is a ſweet and pleaſant *Emphaſis* in that word [*me*] ſpeaking ſo much, that if infinite Power and Grace were capable of any limitation, and there could be any bounds fixed to it, *Paul* did conceive he was in the bounds and limits of infinite Power and Grace; if there were an impoſſibility for Grace to ſave any Sinner, he might have thought it ſhould be impoſſible for Grace to have ſaved him, who judged himſelf *The chiefeſt of Sinners, and leſs than the leaſt of all Saints.* And if each Chriſtian did look upon himſelf as the greateſt Debtor to the Juſtice of God, his debt to the infinite Grace of God ſhould appear more ſingular.

Secondly; We may perceive, that a Chriſtians Happineſs doth conſiſt in a ſweet exchange of Dominions and Governments: Once Sin doth *reign in his mortal body*, and he is under the Dominion of his Luſts; but then Grace doth ſtep in, and exauctorates and dethrones the former King, and doth reign in the temple of our Heart. This is clear, *Rom.* 5. laſt; and that is a remarkeable word which is there, *That Grace may reign*: the word in the Original doth ſignifie ſo much, *That Grace may play the King*, βασιλεύσει, and this fulneſs of Graces dominion, is that the Apoſtle aims at here. And certainly, there is no Repentance of this exchange of Maſters: There is much noiſe and rumour of complaints amongſt People in theſe days of the change of Governments, from one *ſpecies* of Government to another; we ſhall leave theſe debates unto men who deſire to exerciſe their ſpirits about them: But ſure we are of this, That thoſe who are given up to this change, ſhall have it paſs as moſt legitimate and lawful, by the Divine approbation, both of Angels, and of the Souls of juſt Men now made perfect.

Thirdly, The way that *Paul* taketh here to propoſe his Complaint, under the ſtrong prevalency of the Body

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of Death, by way of Queſtion, *Who ſhall deliver me?* doth not import any heſitation about his perſuaſion of certainty, that he at laſt ſhould ſing a Song of Triumph over his Luſts; but only that it would be among the richeſt and moſt ſingular Monuments and Trophies of the Victory of *Chriſt* to ſave him. *Paul* did (no doubt) conceive that amongſt all the Royal Monuments of *Chriſt's* conqueſt, that ſhould be, as it were, hanged about the walls of that higher and glorious Palace, *Paul* ſhould be put in the higheſt place, as having leaſt merit to bring him there, (if there could be any merit at all) and moſt Love and Grace.

Now to come more particularly to the words; After *Paul* hath moſt divinely ſet forth that woful oppoſition and contradiction that was made by the unrenewed part againſt the renewed; and what ſtrong dominion Sin had over him, he doth in theſe words breath out a ſweet deſire to be delivered, not only from his actual corruption, but from his original guilt, which here he calleth *The Body of this Death*, not only becauſe Corruption is a thing which may be eaſily diſcerned and known to us; it being (ſo to ſpeak) a thing which may fall under the object of our ſight, being no Spirit but a Body: But alſo becauſe of theſe great multitudes of corruptions that flow from that root of original Sin, it having ſo many different Members and Parts which are ſo diverſified and ſo compleat, that they may make up a Body, which Body if it be entertained, ſhall certainly bring and occaſion death. So when he is under the ſtrong Convictions of his guilt, and hath had a compleat Diſcovery of himſelf, you may ſee his exerciſe holden forth in theſe words, *O wretched man*; the word in the Original ταλαίπωρος, ſignifieth one that is wearied with troubleſome and continual combats, with little apparent ſucceſs, and this doth certainly import that he was a man, much and continually taken up in wreſtling againſt his corruptions, and endeavouring to bring them into ſubjection, unto the obedience of *Chriſt Jeſus*.

And ye may ſee likewiſe in theſe words, the way that

Paul took to overcome his luſts, he was much in the exerciſe of Prayer; for the words that we have read, are indeed a ſhort and *pathetick* Prayer. I conceive that word which is recorded in Iſai. 38. 14. *O Lord I am oppreſſed, undertake for me*, is a ſweet Paraphraſe upon theſe words.

Fourthly; You may ſee his great and principal ſuit to have been, *Deliverance from this Body of Death*: This Captive-exile was haſtening to be delivered, and looking out at the windows of his Priſon-houſe, waiting till the Jaylor ſhould come and open the doors, and take his chains and fetters from off his feet: We confeſs theſe ſhall not be fully taken off, till we ſhall be paſſing thorow the door of our everlaſting Reſt, and then that woful and ſad Complaint ſhall take its everlaſting *Adieu* and Farewel; For, if we may ſpeak ſo, the burial-place of Sin is before the door of our eternal Reſt, it then ceaſeth to be when we begin more eminently to have a Being. But may we not be aſhamed and bluſh, that we are not more in uttering thoſe inexpreſſible Sighs and Groans of the Spirit, under the conviction of our Sinfulneſs, ſince this holy man, who had no doubt, attained unto a great length in Mortification, had *plucked out many right eyes*, and *cut off many right hands* and had oft-times returned Victor after War, was ſo much in groaning under his corruption. O! But we have inverted ſtrangely the way to Heaven! I conceive practical *Antinomianiſme* is an *Epidemic* Error in theſe days: Many think that it is below a regenerate man to mourn, and to ſit down and lament over the body of death; we know not what it is *to make our Bed to ſwim*, and to be *bedewing the way to Zion with Tears, when our faces are thitherward*; ye conceive that it is a Leſſon to be practiſed and learned by thoſe in a lower *Claſſe*, and thoſe who are learning, (ſo to ſpeak) the Rudiments of Chriſtianity, and not to be exerciſed by thoſe, who are now advanced unto the high degree of Chriſtianity, that being (as it were in your apprehenſion) a degrading of your ſelves from that pitch of perfection, unto which in your imagination you have attained

attained; but, believe me, it is a work not below the eldeſt Chriſtian, nor above the youngeſt Believer; and the more one be really old in Religion, this work will alwaies be new in his practice. I ſhall only give you that divine Counſel of a holy Man, who deſired Chriſtians to ſet about the Mortification of their Luſts, as though they had never been taken up in that Duty before; each day to ſet about Mortification, not as a Proficient, but as a Beginner, who hath never made any progreſs in that bleſſed Work before.

Now in ſpeaking upon *Paul's* exerciſe, which is here holden forth, that he was continually exerciſed in wreſtling againſt thoſe corruptions, and that body of death that was in him; we need not ſtand long to prove that it is the duty of a Chriſtian to be ſo exerciſed and taken up; there is ſomewhat of that implyed in that word, *Act.* 24. 16. And it is more clearly preſſed, *Col.* 3. 5. *Epheſ.* 6. 13. and 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. And no doubt, if a Chriſtian did reflect more upon the nature of ſin, and conſider that by it, diſformity with God is increaſed, and precious conformity with him loſt; and, did we take up ſin in its woful effects, that it worketh death, and involveth us under the curſe of *a living God*, we would be more conſtant in this Spiritual Warfare. O! but Chriſtians thorow want of the apprehenſion of theſe, are much diſinabled to *ſtand faſt to that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made them free*, and *intangle themſelves again with the yoke of bondage*: So that I conceive, if *God* were coming to give a name to the Chriſtians of this generation, he might call us, *Iſſachar*, becauſe we do now crouch down under two burdens, and are become ſervants unto tribute; and even thoſe that are more refined and tender in their walk in theſe dayes, he might call them *Reuben*, becauſe they are unſtable as water, which marreth their excellency.

But that which firſt we ſhall ſpeak to, is, How the wreſtlings of a natural Man againſt the body of death, and thoſe corruptions that are within him, may be diſtinguiſhed from the wreſtlings of one that is really godly.

And first we conceive, that it is without debate and controversie, that a Man altogether unregenerate, by Natures light may be put on to mortifie (if so we may speak) and contradict those sins, which are most sensual and gross; Natures light including an antipathy and detestation of those things within it self; though we confess, through the depravement of our Nature, those sins which fall under the sphere of Natures mortification, are now abridged unto a small sum; it being not now refined and clear, as it was when Man was in the estate of Innocence.

Secondly, Another sort may, from some common qualification, oppose some Sins; as those that are of more heroick and refined Spirits, will have detestation against Covetousness and other Sins of that nature, and so in some sense may endeavour the mortification of these things.

Thirdly, The same may a natural man do by such a conviction of the Holy Ghost, as is but a common work of the Spirit; he may be put on to mortifie these Sins that are more visible, and somewhat gross in their Nature, as is clear from the practice of those who cleanse the outside of the Platter, and study to have an outward conformity unto the Law of God, notwithstanding of that inward and secret antipathy against the strictness of his Law; yea more, a natural man who hath some predominant Evil, may endeavour and will attempt to wrestle against that Sin, which is in a direct line of opposition against it; as one that is given to the vice of Covetousness, he will study to mortifie the Vice of Prodigality, those being two opposite Vices. Now from all these we may conclude, that upon every opposition which we use against our corruptions, it is not safe to infer, that we are really engaged in this spiritual warfare; it being, we think, another thing than the most part of us do imagine it to be: And we confess it is a difficulty, even to attain that length of endeavour in Mortification, which the Natural man by these things which we have spoken may attain to. But for the difference

betwixt

betwixt their debates, the *first* is this, That a natural and unregenerate man doth mainly wreſtle againſt theſe Sins, that are outward and more groſs, and not ſo much againſt thoſe Sins that are inward, and fall not under the eye of man: We do not deny but a natural Man may wreſtle againſt vain Thoughts, and have ſome ſmall oppoſition againſt the ſtirring of Corruption within his own boſome; but we conceive, That there are theſe *two* ſecret Sins which a natural Man is not at all taken up in wreſtling againſt, at leaſt very little, *viz.* his *Original corruption*, and his *Unbelief*; whereas one that is really Godly, is much taken up in bearing down theſe. *Paul* is here taken up in wreſtling againſt his Original Sin; and *David*, Pſal. 51. 5. compared with *verſ.* 2. and 7. is likewiſe taken up in wreſtling againſt it; and that good man that is recorded of in the Goſpel, who cried forth, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief*, was much taken up in wreſtling againſt his unbelief; and *David*, *Pſal.* 77. from the beginning to the 10*th* Verſe and forward. And certainly, one that never was taken up in wreſtling againſt theſe two (at leaſt in ſome ſmall meaſure and degree) he may heſitate much whether or no he was ever ſeriouſly engaged in this holy Warfare. O! but if many that paſs under the notion of Profeſſors were poſed, when they did enter into the liſts with original corruption; there are many who without breach of truth might ſay, They never knew what it was to contend againſt it: And this certainly ſpeaks forth much of our ignorance of original guilt; And believe me, there is more difformity unto the Image of God in original Sin, than in a thouſand actual out-breakings: And it is but in vain for a Chriſtian to attempt the mortification and cutting off of Branches, till once he ſtudy to pluck up the Root, which doth bear *Gall and Wormwood.*

A *Second* difference is this, A Natural Man wreſtleth againſt his Corruptions, rather becauſe they bring him under the ſtroke of the juſtice of God, than becauſe they are contrary to the Holineſs of God: Hence is it that the moſt part of a natural Mans wreſtling is, when he is under

under affliction; somewhat of which is pointed out, *Psal.*78.34,35. Now this difference is clear in *Joseph* and *Paul*, who made the Holiness of God, the great *Topicks* and common-place whence they did produce all their arguments for contradicting Sin, as *Paul* in this Chapter, and *Joseph* in that precious sentence, *Shall I do this, and sin against God?* but *Cain*, who was a man cut off from the right hand of the Lord, had another principle of contradicting and wrestling against his lusts, *My punishment is greater than I can bear*, Gen.4.13. And hence is it that a Natural man doth never oppose Sin, as it is a cause to interrupt Fellowship and Communion with God, or from that Divine Principle of Christ's love constraining him: O! but the Principles of a Natural Man wrestling against corruption, be selfish and low! And if there were not a Hell, and a place of Torment, Natural men would take a latitude to themselves not to mortifie sin. But sure it argues a Divine and Heroick Spirit, and most suitable to them, *who have Christ in them their hope of glory*, that though there were neither any reward or remuneration of their obedience, neither any punishment of their disobedience, yet simple desire to please God, and not to profane his Holiness, which he loveth, would tye them to obedience. I may confidently say, that these who never knew what it was to have that threefold cord, and that precious triple chain, binding them to obedience, and inducing them to mortifie their lusts, to wit, *The Holiness of God, the fear to interrupt Communion and Fellowship with Him, and the Love of Christ*, may question whether they were ever seriously engaged in this holy Warfare: But withal we do not deny, but the fear of punishment is likewise a most Divine Principle of Mortification in its own place; but except there be somewhat higher, it is not to build upon.

The third difference is this, that a Natural Man studieth more to restrain sin, than to mortifie it; for, he resteth satisfied with the restraint of the actings of sin, though there be no mortification of that vicious inclination which is in the Man; this is clear in *Haman*, Esth. 3.5.

3. 5. in *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 24. 16, 17. and following verſes, compared with 1 *Sam.* 26. 2. and in the Scribes and Phariſees, *Matth.* 23. 25. But, the mortification that the Goſpel requireth, is of a higher nature, *Gal.* 5. 24. where we are commanded *to crucifie the fleſh with the affections and luſts*; not only to reſtrain the acts, but to mortifie the habits: We confeſs it is a difficulty to determine the difference betwixt the reſtraint of ſin, and mortifying of ſin: and this maketh it the more difficult; that ſins which are really mortified, ſometimes a Chriſtian may be overtaken to commit, which I conceive ſeldom or never holds of ſins that are more groſs, but holds oft-times of ſins that are of a lower nature and degree. Yet, theſe things may a little point forth the difference, 1. A Chriſtian who hath ſin mortified, is filled with much Divine joy and ſatisfaction, in the mortifying of it, that it is ſo; which we conceive, doth partly proceed from this, that a Chriſtian, when he is honoured to mortifie a luſt, he ordinarily then receives the intimation of his peace and intereſt in God, in a more lively and Spiritual way. And 2. Becauſe at that time alſo he doth receive much precious and ſweet communion with God, his Soul then is in life; ſomewhat of this is pointed out to us, *Rom.* 8. 13. and *Rom.* 7. 24. compared with verſe 25. 3. The difference may be known by this, that when a Man hath been much in the exerciſe of Faſting and Prayer for the mortifying of ſuch a Luſt and Idol, and hath not attained to this with great facility, there is great appearance that upon the deſiſting of tentation, and the actings of his Spirit to commit ſuch a thing, ſuch a Luſt is mortified, and not reſtrained only. There is ſomewhat of this pointed forth, *Matth.* 17. 20, 21. where its ſaid, That there is no caſting out of Devils, of this ſort, but by Faſting and Prayer. We conceive the place is principally to be underſtood concerning the Faith of Miracles, though by Proportion and Analogy it may hold of Sanctifying Faith: O! our Luſts in theſe days do rather go out, than are caſt out; they rather dye to us, then we to them. 4. The frame of ſpirit which we have after mortifying

fying of a luſt, may let us ſee whether it be a real work, or only ſome reſtraint for a time; a man that doth attain ſuch a length, as really to mortifie and crucifie any luſt, is much taken up in the exerciſe of praiſe, *Rom.*7.25. 1 *Cor.* 15.55,56,57. he is under conviction of his duty to bleſs the Lord, though he is alſo convinced of an impoſſibility of bleſſing him as he ought to do: but we think, when luſts are reſtrained only, and not mortified, the man is not ſo much taken up in the exerciſe of praiſe. O! What heavenly Elogies and Songs of praiſe have the Saints penned unto the unſearchable and omnipotent Grace of *Chriſt*, when they have been enabled to overcome and crucifie a luſt, *Their Souls have been inditing a good matter concerning the praiſes of the King, their Tongue hath been as the Pen of a ready Writer.* 5. And this may, *laſtly*, point out the difference; Sins that are mortified do not for the moſt part preſently recur, ſo as to obtain victory over the Chriſtian; we confeſs, Satan, to weaken our confidence, may aſſault us with tentations to commit that iniquity, that ſo we may be brought to call in queſtion our real and ſpiritual Victory over it: but if a Luſt be only reſtrained, it cannot be long away from obtaining victory; this is clear from *Eſth.* 4. 10. compared with the following Verſes, as likewiſe from 1 *Sam.* 24. 16,17, *&c.* compared with 1 *Sam.* 26. 2.

The *Fourth* Difference. A Natural Man is not conſtant in his wreſtling againſt his Corruptions, but takes it by fits and ſtarts, either when he is under Affliction, or ſome other ſad Occurrence that doth befal him, or through ſome ſharp and ſudden conviction of a commonly enlightened Conſcience; but he that is really taken up in this Spiritual Warfare, hath a conſtancy in maintaining of it, at leaſt in his endeavours: this is clear from *Acts* 24. 16. and *Col.* 3.5. And indeed that woful inconſtancy that we have in this Spiritual Warfare, doth evidence our little real engagement in the work. Are there not many here, who can interrupt this warfare many Weeks, and yet not be much under either the diſcovery of their loſs, or under any impreſſion of Sorrow

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becauſe of it? Sure, if this were believed, that there may be more loſt in one Day, than can be regained in many, we would endeavour to be more conſtant. O! but Grace is a tender thing, and we ought to keep it *as the apple of our eye.* Alas, there are but too many, who ſlacken their endeavour againſt Sin, and will lye idle many days, and yet are ready to think, that when they pleaſe, they can ſhake themſelves off their luſts as at other times; but to theſe we ſhall only ſay this, Beware leſt that diſpenſation once meet you, that when ye ſhall begin to ſhake your ſelves off your luſts and off your bands, your ſtrength ſhall be gone from you, and then your enemies ſhall lead you captive, and put out your two eyes. O! But ſomtimes our Corruptions get ſuch advantage over us, that we may ſay, *Video meliora proboq; deteriora ſequor.*

The *Fifth* Difference, They go not about this Warfare from a right Principle, which the Chriſtian doth, the one wreſtles in their own ſtrength, but the other reſting upon the ſtrength of *Jehovah, that everlaſting ſtrength*; this is pointed at, *Rom.* 8. 13. There is a command, that a wreſtling Chriſtian ſtudies alwaies to obey: a Chriſtian uſes much that precious Divinity of *David*, 1 *Samuel* 17. 45, 46. when they go to war.

And alas, there are many that are living under the apprehenſion of this Warfare, who in the day of their accompts, we fear ſhall be found never really to have entered in the Liſts *with Principalities, and Powers, and ſpiritual Wickedneſſes.* And it is no wonder that many of us be foiled by the hand of our iniquities, we not having ſitten down firſt when we engaged, to conſult, whether we with our ten thouſand, were able to meet him that came againſt us with his twenty thouſand; we engaged without the apprehenſion of difficulty, and ſo no wonder we be overcome without much difficulty. Now examine your ſelves by theſe, whether indeed you be engaged in this Spiritual Warfare, or not.

Now that which, *Secondly*, we ſhall ſpeak to, ſhall be, to thoſe advantages that a Chriſtian may have by being continually taken up in this Spiritual Warfare. The firſt

advantage

advantage is this; It is an excellent way to obtain Victory over theſe Luſts and Idols wherewith we are beſet: We conceive it is no wonder that this be the great and general complaint of Chriſtians in theſe days, that they are led captive by the hand of their iniquities, and that the voice and noiſe of the Spoiler is ſo much heard with them, becauſe they are not taken up in a conſtant debating and contending with Sin: There is ſomewhat of this pointed out to us, *Rev.* 3 5. where though that Promiſe be principally underſtood of the reward of an overcomer, when he ſhall be Above, that *he ſhall be clothed in white*, yet we think it may include this, That a Man that is in the way, and conſtant exerciſe of overcoming, ſhall attain to much divine conformity with God, and much divine diſformity with the world: and to thoſe who are much diſcouraged with their little ſucceſs and apparent victory in this War, notwithſtanding of their conſtancy in debate with their Luſts, we ſhall only ſpeak that for their comfort by way of Alluſion, which is in Daniel 7. 12. *Their dominion ſhall be taken from them, but their lives be prolonged for a ſeaſon and time:* The dominion of your Luſts ſhall be taken away, though their lives may be prolonged for your exerciſe and dependance on him for a ſhort time and ſeaſon: Ye may have tribulation in this Spiritual Warfare *ten days*; but be convinced of this that the day is coming, when ye ſhall ſit down upon a Throne, after ye have overcome, as *Chriſt* alſo did ſit down, after he had overcome; once ye ſhall ſtand and defend the field, when all your Luſts ſhall flee as chaff before the wind; albeit oftimes our diſcouragement ſpeaks that word which *Saul* ſpake to *David*, 1 *Samuel* 17. 33. (when we are to wreſtle with the Devil) *Thou art not able to go againſt this Philiſtine to fight with him, for thou art but a Youth, and he a Man of war from his youth*; yet a Chriſtian ought to anſwer, *Through God I ſhall do valiantly.*

Secondly, It is the way to attain much divine Conſolation, as is clear, Rev. 2.17. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat the hidden Manna*, which is (as we conceive)

conceive) in part, he ſhall receive of the Conſolations of the Holy Ghoſt, though it be principally underſtood of *Jeſus Chriſt*. O! What a divine contentment and unſpeakable ſolace of mind doth a Chriſtian attain by entertaining a conſtant enmitie againſt his Luſts. I am perſuaded that that which doth interrupt a Chriſtians peace much, is the interruption of that holy and divine enmity, which we ought to have againſt Sin; Believe me, there is more real ſatisfaction to be found in one days ſerious debate againſt Sin, than in having an eternity of enjoyment of the moſt flouriſhing pleaſures in the World: Ye *may ſow in tears* in this Warfare, but *ye ſhall only reap in joy*: The firſt part may be true of the Men of the World, in their purſuits after their Pleaſures, they do ſow in Tears; But it was never yet heard, nor left upon Record, that they did reap in joy; there was always a correſpondence betwixt their Seed-time, and their Harveſt: But there is a divine tranſmutation and diſproportion betwixt the Seed-time of a Chriſtian and his Harveſt, unſpeakable joy can ſpring off the root of their moſt bitter Sorrows.

Thirdly, It is an excellent way to maintain the faith of our intereſt in God; this is clear from *Revel.* 2. 17. where *Chriſt* giveth this promiſe to the overcomers, that he will give them *a new Name*; which holdeth forth their Adoption and Intereſt in him, which no man can know, but he that receiveth it: And certainly there is nothing that over-clouds a Chriſtians hope ſo much, nor darkeneth his intereſt, as an intermiſſion in this Holy Warfare. Yea, more particularly, he attaineth to the moſt certain perſuaſion of his Victory over his Corruptions: There is ſomewhat of this pointed out, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *I have fought the good fight of Faith*, and hence he doth infer, that there is laid *up for him a Crown of righteouſneſs*, which doth certainly import and include in its boſome, that *Paul* upon his conſtant endeavour to wreſtle againſt Corruption, did attain to much certainty of overcoming. I think it is altogether impoſſible for a Chriſtian, intermitting this Holy Warfare, to entertain

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any divine or assured persuasion, that it shall have a blessed issue and period. And we think it is from this, that oftimes his own cry out, *Who can stand before the children of Anak?* and do conclude to make to themselves a Captain, and go back unto *Egypt*: Though we think, that if we were constant in this, we should be taught, not only to entertain a holy undervaluing them, but likewise a divine certainty of overcoming them. I think a Christian hath not only that advantage by being constant in this Warfare, that he is brought to an assured persuasion that he shall overcome, but likewise doth most sweetly conclude, that the strength of his corruption is already gone, therefore he may go up, and war with them.

Fourthly, By maintaining this Warfare, a Christian gets much experience; by it he attains to much distinct apprehension of the deceitfulness of him, who is *the deceiver of the Brethren.* We are persuaded that he who is constant in this Warfare, can speak most to those singular Subtilties of Satan, and can most distinctly fathom these deep devices of his; as likewise he can best take up the unsearchable deceitfulness of his own heart: and there is, no doubt, no small advantage in the taking up of these two, that we may be provoked both to self-diffidence, as likewise to have our confidence and hope much reposed upon *Jesus Christ*, who is *the Captain of our Salvation*, that in that day, when the blast of the terrible one, is as a storm against our wall, and when the Archer doth shoot at, and grievously wound us, we may go unto him, whose name is *Everlasting strength*, that so by his strength we may be enabled to overcome.

That which *Thirdly* we shall speak to, shall be to give some reasons why Christians do obtain so small victory in this Spiritual Warfare: And in this, we shall not only speak to these moral and culpable causes, why Christians do not obtain much Victory, but we shall likewise speak a little to these divine and precious ends that God hath in denying it to his own, who in some small measure are entertaining a constant enmity against their corruption.

And

And as for the first, it doth proceed from too much self-conceit and a presumptuous opinion of their own strength: I am persuaded, that that which made *Peter* so uncapable to resist the tentations of denying *Christ*, did much proceed from that self-conceit, as in Matth. 36. 33. *Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.* Therefore we think, that the first and most excellent way to obtain Victory, is, to be dwelling under the apprehensions of our own weakness and inability to overcome; That holy and divine Paradox being alwaies made true, *When we are weak, then are we strong:* and we may enter into the lists with our corruptions, having no confidence in the flesh, but desiring in the Name of the *God of Israel* to wrestle with the strongest *Goliah* that opposeth us. O! but Humility is a most sweet and strong piece of armour, wherewith a Christian ought to be cloathed, when he goeth to War: He must walk in that holy Fear, which may be consistent with Faith, and must entertain so much Faith and spiritual Confidence, as may not altogether cut off holy Fear.

There is a *Second* cause, which is, too much intanglement with the pleasures and affairs of the World: It is impossible for one, who is taken up in the continual noise and buz of things here below, to be an Overcomer; hence *Paul* presseth, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. that *No man that warreth, entangle himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him, who hath chosen him to be a Souldier*; and that word, 1 Cor. 9. 25. *He that striveth for the mastery, must be temperate in all things.* O! how often through the deceitfulness of the World and the Pleasures thereof, are we led captive by the hand of our iniquities, and do fall before our enemies? I know nothing so suitable nor helpful for a Christian to overcome, as to be denied to these three cardinal and fundamental Temptations, by which Satan standeth to allure us; which are, *The lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life*; that our eye may not take in any sweet or pleasant representations of the transient vanities of the world, neither may our sensual Appetite be taken with

the taste of these most bitter and sour delights, neither that we be ambitious of the enjoyment and actual possession of them.

There is a *Third* Cause, which is, That we are not taken up in the exercise of watchfulness: This is certain, that the exercise of this grace hath most Divine influence for the overcoming of our corruptions, as is clear from *Matth.* 26.41. and *Mark* 14.38. That ought to be the great *Motto* of a Christian Souldier, and engraven upon his Armour, *Watch:* Watchfulness is not only effectual for overcoming in this respect, that it doth discover unto us our temptations, when they begin to assail us, but likewise it discovers both the subtilty and strength of our temptations; also the weakness and inability of Christians to resist them; And if these three are attained, seldom or never is a Christian much foiled by the hand of his iniquities: Therefore that which I would say to one Christian-Souldier, I would say unto all, *Watch.*

There is a *Fourth* Cause of our small Victory, which is, That we are not much taken up in the exercise of Secret Prayer; Prayer being indeed that noble and spiritual Weapon, by which Christians do overcome, as is clear from *Math.* 26. 41. and 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. where *Paul*, when *a messenger of Satan was buffeting him, did beseech the Lord thrice*, a practice much unknown by most Christians, who know not what it is *to Pray without ceasing*, nay, even when tempted much without intermission. I think of all the Weapons that a Christian taketh to resist Temptation, this is the most effectual; For when *Satan* seeth that a Christian improves the Temptation so much for his own advantage, as to make it an errand to go to God, then he desists and gives over to contend: I confess a Christian may in so far glory in his infirmities, as they give him an occasion to converse more frequently with *God*. O! Had we spent more of our time in conversing with *God*, when we were alone, we had attained many sweet Trophies, and fruits of our Victory,

Victory, which now we have only in hope and expectation.

There is a *Fifth* Cauſe; which is, That we are not much taken up in the exerciſe of Faith, which is that chief piece of Armour that *Paul* doth preſcribe unto the Chriſtian, Epheſ. 6. 16. *Above all things take the ſhield of faith, whereby ye ſhall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked:* There is that ſweet note of commendation put upon this piece of Armour, That there is no Temptation a Chriſtian can meet with, but through the exerciſe of Faith, he may be able to overcome it: Hence *Paul* ſaith, Ye ſhall be able to quench *all* the fiery Darts of the *Devil:* This piece of Armour is not only defenſive, but we may ſay, It is offenſive likewiſe. Now Faith helps a Chriſtian to overcome his Temptations and Corruptions, wherewith he is aſſaulted, not only by laying hold on the infinite ſtrength of Him, who is *The Captain of Salvation*; but likewiſe Faith is that Grace, which hath the moſt ſubtile and Divine Eye in taking up the ſtrength of Corruption: O! but a man much in the exerciſe of Faith, is a man that can paſſe a moſt accurate ſentence upon his luſts and Idols wherewith he doth rencounter: there is nothing impoſſible to the believing man: and I think, if there be any grace by which a Chriſtian doth aſcend moſt to a divine ſimilitude unto the Omnipotency of *God*, it is by the grace of Faith: hereby is the Chriſtians power moſt ſtrengthned. O! but Faith will make thoſe that are weak ſtrong: Therefore we would deſire you to be exerciſing your confidence upon him, who is that *munition of rocks*, that ſo through him and the word of your teſtimony, ye may overcome.

This *laſtly* may be a cauſe of the ſmalneſs of our triumph, that after a begun Victory over a luſt, we are ordinarily entangled with ſecurity, not knowing what it is to make the Victory over one Luſt, a ſweet provocation to the overcoming of another. I think (if we may allude unto that word, *Pſal.* 18. 37.) it ought to be much the practiſe of a Chriſtian, *to purſue his enemies till he overtake*

take them, and never to turn again till they be conſumed, for by the ſtrength of him who *is Jehova*, we may *run thorow a troop*, and by *our God aſſiſting we may leap over a wall.* O! a conſtant exerciſe in this war, never proclaiming a ceſſation of armes, would make a ſpeedy riddance of all our adverſaries; he then *would teach our hands to war*, and *by our arms a bow of ſteel might be broken.* But there is no diſcharge in this war till death, believe me, then we ſhall receive our everlaſting arrears for all our toil.

Now to the ſecond ſort of reaſons propoſed, *viz.* Thoſe Divine ends that *the Lord* hath in this, why Chriſtians do not attain victory over their luſts, though in ſome ſmall meaſure endeavouring conſtancy in war; it doth either proceed from this, that *God* knows that we can better improve a wreſtling eſtate than an overcoming eſtate, while we are here below; we canbetter thrive with war than we can do with victory. Therefore while we are travelling thorow this wilderneſſe, he doth ſtill keep us in exerciſe with ſerpents and ſcorpions: or it doth much proceed from this, that we may be kept in a conſtant dependence upon *God*, and may entertain a holy and conſtant correſpondence with Him. It is certain, that if we were not conſtrained to walk with God, through a Principle of Neceſſity, ſeldom would we walk with him through a Principle of a Duty, or from a Principle of Love: For it is obvious to a Chriſtian upon his ſecret ſearch, that we walk moſt with *God*, when we feel moſt need of him: It doth likewiſe proceed from this, that we may be kept humble while we are here below, and not be exalted above meaſure; as alſo, that the Grace and Power of our *Bleſſed Lord Jeſus*, in helping us to overcome, may be rendered more conſpicuous and evident; this being the great ſtage on which *Chriſt's* Power doth moſt eminently act and appear over our Weakneſs, and the apprehenſions of theſe inſuperable difficulties wherewith we are beſet, and oft overcome.

Now to ſhut up our Diſcourſe, We ſhall deſire, That once at laſt ye may give up your Names unto *Jeſus Chriſt*, to

fight

fight under his Royal Banner; and believe me, though your Corruptions were never ſo ſtrong, yet at laſt ye ſhall overcome them: the certainty whereof is made out unto you by this, That your bleſſed *Head, hath led captivity captive,* and *is now exalted at the right Hand of Majeſty on high*: and the hope and expectation of that bleſſed iſſue may make you rejoyce *with joy unſpeakable and full of Glory.*

SERMON II.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Chriſt's, have crucified the Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts.*

O! When ſhall that great and excellent wonder be ſeen in Heaven, which *John* did ſee, *Rev.* 12. 1, 6. to behold the inviſible Church, and thoſe that are Expectants of Heaven, which is that Woman clothed and adorned with that ſpotleſs and beautiful Righteouſneſs of a crucified Saviour, which is pointed out, by her being clothed with the Sun, and regulated by the Doctrine of the Twelve Apoſtles, which is indeed that precious Star which will bring us unto the place where *Chriſt* lies, and will ſweetly conduct us unto him; and withal to have that great Idol under our Feet, viz. *The World,* the Emblem of which is the Moon; becauſe it is ſubject to many Viciſſitudes and Changes, and hath moſt different and contrary Aſpects; though we conceive, that if many Chriſtians were to be painted, we might fix the Moon upon their Head; for they uſe not the World as their Servant, but as their Maſter; Mortification is an exerciſe that doth not ſuit with Fleſh and Blood; It is a hard ſaying to a man, ſetled upon the Dregs of Nature, and as yet fixed in that old ſtock:

O! but it is ſad Divinity to many, that except we die with Chriſt we cannot reign with him; we muſt get into the fellowſhip of his Sufferings, and be conformable unto his Death, before we can attain to the Reſurrection from the Dead. We love to divide thoſe things that *God* hath conjoyned, to take *Chriſt* for Righteouſneſs and Salvation, but not for a King and for Sanctification: And if it was an evidence unto Wiſe *Solomon*, That ſhe was not the Mother of the Child, who pleaded for the diviſion of it; ſo it may be ſuppoſed, That he who will not take whole *Chriſt*, but would have him divided, is not one that is predeſtinated to the Adoption of Children. We confeſs there are many that love Chriſt's Coat, rather than his Graces; and if they purſue after theſe, it is more after ſuch Graces as are adorning, than ſaving: And we conceive that there are theſe three Graces that a Hypocrite doth moſt purſue after; There is the Grace of Prayer, the Grace of Knowledg, and the Grace of Humility: and of the laſt we may ſay, a Hypocrite may endeavour to perſonate it, but there is always within his boſome ſome Conviction of his little attainment: It is impoſſible for an Hypocrite to think himſelf nothing. Oh! That we could once attain to that precious length of Chriſtianity, as to be entertaining a Holy Oblivion of our attainments, and a Sanctified Memory of our Imperfections; That the former might be written, as it were, in the Sand, and the latter might be engraven in the fleſhly Tables of our Heart, and kept conſtantly upon Record. We confeſs there is not much of our Leaf that withers in theſe days, but much of our fruit withers and decays: O! Is not man become ſo brutiſh and ignorant, that he may be ſent unto the Beaſts of the Field to be inſtructed of that which is his Duty. *Solomon* makes mention of four Beaſts on Earth, which are little and exceeding wiſe, *Prov.* 30. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. All which may teach us ſome ſpiritual Doctrine; *Firſt*, there are the Ants, who may teach us that Grace of Divine Prudence and Chriſtian Policy, in laying hold on our Occaſions and Opportunities, who though they be not a ſtrong

People,

People, yet provide their Meat in Summer: and no doubt, we ſhould be fighting with our Spiritual Enemies, while it is yet Day, for the Night cometh, wherein no Man can fight. Actions done in ſeaſon, adde a great deal of Luſtre and Perfection to them, every thing being beautiful in its ſeaſon. *Secondly*, There are the Conies, who may teach us that Grace of ſelf-Denial, to diſtruſt our own Strength, and in the day of ſtraits to run unto Him, who is that *Munition of Rocks*, when the blaſt of the terrible One is as a ſtorm againſt our Wall; for they being a feeble People, make their Houſes in the Rocks: For no doubt, Atheiſm and Idolatry are the two great impediments of Mortification, too much Confidence in our ſelves, which is Idolatry; and much Diffidence in God, which is our Atheiſm. Moreover, we may go to the Locuſts, which would teach us that Primitive Grace of Unity, who though they want a King, yet go forth by Bands. And *Laſtly*, We may go to the Spider, which may teach us that Grace of Spiritual-mindedneſs, and of aſpiring after thoſe ſublime and excellent things of God, for they are in Kings Palaces. O! to be more converſant with Heaven, and thoſe things that are above: This would make us to diſtaſte theſe lower Springs, and they would be to us as the bitter waters of *Marah*.

But to come more particularly to the words, you have many precious things concerning Mortification pointed out, which is that precious and cardinal grace, of which we intend at this time to ſpeak. 1. You have this infinite adantage of it held forth, to wit, that ſuch do meet with divine intimation of their intereſt in Chriſt, and that they are Chriſt's, which is indeed the high elevation of a Chriſtian: And this is clear from the words, that ſuch an one may from this gather, that his name is written in the ancient and precious records of heaven: And, no doubt, little divine wreſtling with our corruptions, makes us to have the extract of our pardon ſo often withdrawn to our ſenſe. 2. There is held forth the extenſive nature of mortification, that a Chriſtian ought not only to mortifie the fleſh which is original ſin,

(ſo called, not only becauſe of that woful knot of amity and affection which is betwixt us and our luſts, according to that word, *no man ever hated his own fleſh:* (O theſe inviſible knots of union that are betwixt us and our luſts) but alſo, becauſe ſin hath contaminated the whole man, ſo that *from the crown of the head to the ſole of the foot*, there is nothing that is not defiled; as likewayes, becauſe during our abode in theſe tents of Mortality, we muſt have this woful and ſad companion, for there is an unchangeable and unalterable decree of Heaven, that during our time of Minority, we ſhall have that bad aſſociate; But alſo that he ſhould mortifie his affections toward his predominant Idols, to which the affections are ſo much joyned, and the ſoul doth ſo much go out after; and moreover his luſts, which are the firſt motions and riſings of corruption within, and withall may comprehend the eſchewing the firſt ſhadows and appearances of evil, Prov. 4. 14. 15. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men, avoid it, paſſe not by it, turn from it, and paſſe away:* our Mortification ſhould be as much of our inviſible Idols as of our viſible luſts. 3. There is likewayes held forth, the difficulty and painfulneſs of this work, under this notion of *Crucifying*, which was one of the moſt painful deaths. We conceive, that there are many, who are of that mans humour, who wallowing upon the graſs, cryed forth, *Utinam hoc eſſet laborare*, I would this was all my work: there is no doubt, more difficulty in this than we apprehend; we muſt not lye in beds of eaſe, if we intend to be mortifying Chriſtians, we muſt wreſtle as Princes with God, till we prevail; the longſomneſs of this work is alſo pointed at, under the notion of Crucifying, it being a lingring death. We cannot ordinarily fight and triumph in one day; That ambitious Letter of *Cæſars* will not hold here, *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, I came, I ſaw, and overcame: We muſt die mortifying and ſtrugling with our Corruptions, and when one of our Feet is within the borders of Eternity, we muſt be ſighing out that lamentation, *O wretched man that I am*, &c. 4. You have alſo

alſo the intenſive nature of Mortification, that a Chriſtian ſhould be content with nothing but the Death of his Luſts, which is held forth in that word *Crucifie.* O! to bind our ſelves with a holy Oath and Vow, not to dwell in much contentment, till we have gotten the life of our predominant Luſts: Ye muſt not give your Idols quarter upon the moſt plauſible and faireſt terms of ſubjection, otherwiſe, if ye do, I ſhall not ſay that word which the Prophet ſpake to *Ahab*, that *your Life ſhall go for his*; But ſure I am, that confederacy ſhall be broken, and likely not without many Sorrows to your Spirits. There is *Laſtly*, the certainty of this Victory held forth in that word, *They have crucified*; it is here in the bypaſt time, as if it were already accompliſhed, and brought to paſs: And no doubt, this may make us to rejoyce *with joy unſpeakable and full of glory*, that once we ſhall have a triumphant Song put in our Mouth.

Now before we ſhall ſpeak unto any of theſe, we ſhall ſpeak to ſome few things as previous to be known. We ſhall not dwell long in pointing out the nature of Mortification; We conceive it thus, It is a Divine quality of the immortal Soul, derived from the efficacy and vertue of *Chriſts* Death, whereby the ſtrength of Sin is impaired and its dominion taken away; So that we do not totally, nor with full conſent yield our ſelves unto that iron-yoke of our iniquity: Neither ſhall we ſtand long to prove, that it is your duty, to be much in the practice of this Grace: It is clear not only from Col. 3.5. *Mortifie therefore your Members which are upon the Earth*; But alſo from 1 *Pet* 1.15, 16. and 2 *Cor.* 7.1. It ought to be our great deſign and aim to bring all thoſe things in ſubjection, which ſtand in oppoſition to *Jeſus Chriſt*, and it is the noble Prerogative of thoſe Young Men, 1 *Joh.* 2. 13, 14. That they have overcome that wicked one, and have in ſome meaſure trodden Satan under their feet.

But we ſhall ſpeak a little unto this firſt, whether or not a Chriſtian can fall again to the committing of that ſin which once he hath mortified and repented of, and withal

withal hath received an act of pardon for? We conceive indeed (ſo far as we know) there can be no explicit proof given of ſuch a caſe in Scripture, that ever any of thoſe that were heirs of the grace of life, did fall into that ſin which they had once mortified and repented for: But however, we are confident to aver, that it is not inconſiſtent with a gracious eſtate; which we conceive is clear, not only from Gods names, but from his promiſes and from his commands; Doth not that name, that he is *a healer of our back-ſlidings*, and *the repairer of our breaches*, and that name, *he will multiply to pardon*, ſpeak out that a Saints relapſing into a mortified Sin, doth not put him without hope, *Iſai.* 55.7. *Hoſ.* 14. 4. but that he may have confidence that he ſhall not die but live, and declare the wonderous Works of the Lord, though God may ſpeak that word to him, which *Abſalom* ſpake to *Huſhai*, *Is this thy kindneſs to thy Friend?* And withal, do not his Promiſes ſpeak this, *Jer.* 3.22. *I will heal your back-ſlidings*? And do not his commands ſpeak it, *Jer.* 3.1, 12-14-22? How often is back-ſliding *Iſrael* exhorted to return? And He who impoſed that Commandment upon us, to forgive our Brother until *Seventy* and *Seven* times, if he return and repent, will not his Bowels be moved within Him, towards a backſliding Heifer? But withal to provoke you to beware of that Sin, to ſin after Repentance and after Mortification, we ſhall propoſe theſe things.

Firſt, Such a Sin doth create and beget much hardneſs and ſtupidity of Heart, ſo that *our own back-ſlidings do reprove us*, and become not only our Sin, but our Puniſhment; when *God hath ſpoken peace to us, O ſhould we again turn to folly? Secondly*, There is this to diſſwade you, that ſuch Apoſtacy as this, makes a Chriſtian to loſe the ſenſe and comfortable aſſurance of his Intereſt, ſo that ſomtimes he will be even razing, as it were, the Foundations: O! How are backſliders in heart filled with much of the fruit of their own way, and are made to walk *in Darkneſs and to have no Light*: It is much for a Chriſtian to keep faſt his Hands, when after this manner, he hath loſt his Feet.

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Thirdly, Such an one doth ordinarily give much reins, and much liberty to his Corruptions; That is indeed Corruptions year of Jubilee and Releaſe, as is clear from *Jer.* 5. 6. where theſe two are joyned: And may not the nature and aggravating circumſtances of that ſin, make you to eſchew it? Is it not a ſinning againſt light? Is it not a ſinning againſt God, after he hath appeared unto you twice? So that this may be the manner of your bemoaning your ſelf; If it had been an Enemy that had thus done, O Lord, thou mighteſt have born it: But that it ſhould be one, whom thou didſt condeſcend to make thy familiar, and to take ſweet counſel with, that hath lift up his heel againſt thee; This no doubt is an iniquity of a deep dye; And we ſhall only ſay this, that it is imprinted upon the Effigie of godly *Judah Gen.* 38. 26. that after his firſt fall with *Tamar*, he *knew her again no more*: And, no doubt, it were your advantage to obey that counſel, *Let him that ſtandeth take heed leſt he fall.*

Now that which ſecondly we ſhall ſpeak unto, ſhall be to propoſe ſomethings to you by which you may know whether ye be growing in Mortification or not; and becauſe this is moſt neceſſary for you to know;

I ſhall firſt give ſome reaſons why ye muſt needs try your Mortification, and then give you ſome evidences of your Mortification. Firſt to point out the neceſſity of the tryal of your growth. (1.) There are many that delude themſelves in this, ſuppoſing that their luſts are really mortified, when indeed they are but ſleeping, and that they are really caſt out, when indeed they are only gone out for a ſeaſon: thoſe are they *Who are pure in their own Eyes, and yet are not cleanſed from their Iniquities.* (2.) There may be a growth of leaves, where there is not much growth of fruit; a plenty of profeſſion, and much barrenneſs in practice: there are ſome whoſe leaf doth not wither, yet their fruit doth much decay; They have many ſpecious appearances, and yet cannot ſay that the root of the matter is with them. And withal we would ſay that there may be ſome real growth to the fruit, when there is not much growth

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to the root, ſo that though we ſpread forth our branches, yet we do not caſt forth our root as *Lebanon*; We grow ſometimes more in Prayer, and Knowledg, and Joy of the *Holy Ghoſt*, than in Mortification and Humility, though there be a Promiſe for both their growths, *Hoſ.* 14. 5,6.

Thirdly; We would have you know, That there is a Divine Neceſſity for Chriſtians to grow in all the graces of the Spirit, and *to bring forth fruit, even in old age*; to be advancing in Mortification, to be aſcending up in a divine Conformity with God, till we ſhall be made like unto Him: We confeſs indeed, there are ſome ſad interruptions, when we almoſt forget that we were purged from our old Sins: Yet this neceſſity of growth, appears not only from this, that *Chriſt* is the Head of Believers, and they his Members; which Similitude the Apoſtle uſeth *twice* to expreſs Chriſtians growth, *Epheſ.* 4. 15,16. *Col.* 2. 10. And no doubt, ſeeing *Chriſt* is the Head, and we the Members; we muſt grow till there be a Divine Conformity and Reſemblance betwixt us and our Head; Are not we predeſtinate unto this Divine and Noble end, *Rom.* 8. 29? And muſt not we then endeavour to waſh and purifie our ſelves from our Spots, through that precious Blood of Sprinkling, That *we may be holy, as He who hath called us is Holy?*

Fourthly; And more, This is one of the ends of that fulneſs, which was communicated unto *Jeſus Chriſt, our precious Head*, even *to make us compleat*, Col. 2. 9,10. And as his fulneſs is for our growth, ſo our growth is for the making up of his fulneſs, *Epheſ.* 1. 23. Myſtical *Chriſt* will not be compleat, till once all his Members grow up *to the ſtature of the fulneſs of Jeſus Chriſt*; and ſo from that, there is ſuch an inviſible knot of Union and ſupernatural Relation betwixt us and *Chriſt*, that a Chriſtian muſt grow; and if once the firſt draughts and moſt imperfect lineaments of *Chriſt's* image be engraven on our Soul, he will bring it unto perfection, ſeeing this is his noble Prerogative, that his Work is perfect.

Fifthly; There is this alſo that ſpeaks a neceſſity of

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a Chriſtians growth in Mortification, and all the Graces of the Spirit, the faithfulneſs of all the Perſons of the Bleſſed Trinity is engaged and laid in pledg for it. It is clear that the Faithfulneſs of the Firſt Perſon of the Bleſſed Trinity is laid in Pledg, Pſal. 92. 14, 15. *They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old Age, to ſhew that the Lord is upright*, or faithful: which we conceive doth relate to that Promiſe made by the *Father* to the *Son*, in that antient and eternal tranſaction, *Iſa.* 53.10. And is not the faithfulneſs of the *Son* laid in Pledg? Is not this Commandment of the *Father* laid upon him, *That of all that are given to Him, He ſhould loſe none, but raiſe them up at the laſt Day*, Joh. 6. 39,40. So that as *Chriſt* muſt be anſwerable to his charge, He muſt preſent all the Given ones unto the *Father*, which preſuppoſeth their growth in Grace, and their being *made meet for the inheritance of the Saints in Light?* And is not the Faithfulneſs of the Third Perſon of the Bleſſed Trinity likewiſe engaged in this? In that it is his great work to apply *Chriſt's* purchaſe, and to reveal unto us the whole mind of *God*, and to communicate all things that are needful for us to know, and to guide us in all Truth, *Joh.* 16. 13. And if this be his work, will he not accompliſh it, and bring it unto perfection? All which great Works that are committed unto the *Holy Ghoſt* to do, have that ſweet and precious Reſult, *Growth in Grace.*

But withal, by way of Caution, we would have you know, That there are ſome Graces of the Spirit, to whoſe growth there muſt be a time allotted, before we can judg of it. Grace is not like the Graſs of the Field, which groweth in a Night, and periſheth in a Night: It is a woful practice among many, they begin to diſpute their growth, before they have well begun to grow: We would rather counſel you to grow, than to diſpute your growth; Though it is indeed a Chriſtians Duty to take notice, *To go up early to the Vineyards, to ſee if the Vine flouriſh, whether the tender Grapes appear, and the Pomegranats bud forth*; as is clear from *Cant.* 7. 12.

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and from *Pſal.* 63. 8. where *David* taketh notice, not only of his following after *God*, but that his Soul did follow hard after him: Yet (if in this we may allude, we ſhall ſay this unto you) *Judge nothing before the time*; Let your Graces grow, before you judge of their growth. And there is this alſo that we would ſay, That growing in Grace and the fruits of the Spirit, is a myſtery that is more taken up by Faith, than by Senſe; We muſt grow by Faith, and by Faith we will beſt diſcern, eſpecially under Deſertion, and when walking under a Cloud, and *Chriſt* meaſures out bitter things unto us: We confeſs indeed, when we are dandled upon his Knee, and our Cup of Divine Conſolations is running over, and He covering to us a Table in the Wilderneſs, then our growth may be known by Senſe.

Now, *Secondly*, to give you ſome Evidences of your growth in Mortification: There is this; Firſt, mortified ſouls are admitted to read their names in thoſe ancient and precious Records of Heaven, and to know that they were engraven upon his Heart, before the corner-ſtone of the World was laid; this is clear from *Rev.* 2. 17. and 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. and the ground of it is this, that thoſe who are wreſtling as Princes with their luſts, and enduring the heat of the day, he lets them ſee a ſight of the Crown, and of that eternal felicity, that ſo they may endure in that good fight of Faith, and perſevering to the end, may obtain that Crown of Life. And there is this ground of it alſo, becauſe ſuch are much in the exerciſe of thoſe two *cardinal* and *architectonick* Graces of the Spirit, *Faith* and *Prayer*, by which much Divine Familiarity and Fellowſhip with God is attained, and ſo Faith doth increaſe with the increaſe of God.

There is this Second Evidence, When our Luſts have not ſuch power to diſturb us in holy Duties, *viz.* in Prayer, Hearing and Meditating; if you have diſpoſſeſſed thoſe unclean things, and can go about thoſe Duties with a great deal of more Divine Serenity, and compoſedneſs of Spirit, it's a good mark; But if this be wanting, it is an evidence of no great growth in Mortification,

fication, as is clear from *Jer.* 23. 11. and *Ezek.* 33. 31. And we conceive, that this is an Evidence of growth in Mortification upon theſe two grounds; Firſt, a Chriſtian that is much a Victor in this bleſſed Warfare, is oft-times under the dreadful impreſſions of the Majeſty and Holineſs of *God*, by which thoſe ſinful ſtirrings and motions of his Heart are much abated; by reaſon of his terrour, he cannot endure himſelf to be *with the fool in the ends of the earth*, becauſe ſuch an one hath power over his ſpirit and rules over it, ſo that he is not like a City broken down and without Walls. O! It is much for one, to ſubject all his Thoughts to the obedience of *Jeſus Chriſt*, to have nothing within him that lifts up the heel againſt the knowledg and excellency of *Jeſus Chriſt*: And by the way, It is a woful and irrational evil, that we lodg Chriſt only in our faces, and in our mouths we ſpeak of him, and ſeem to love him, but we lodge Idols in our Heart, that excellent Manſion, which ſhould be kept for that excellent Gueſt, the *Immortal King of Glory*, who is the Light of the Higher Houſe.

There is this *Third* Evidence of growth; To be much in exalting and magnifying of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and lifting up of that weighty, but not burdenſome ſtone of his Praiſe; This was an Evidence of *Paul*'s growth in Mortification, *Rom.* 7. 25. 1 *Cor.* 15. 56, 57, 58. O! How the Soul that hath really taſted of that noble thing, mortifying and pardoning Grace, will eſteem *Chriſt* matchleſs, and a Divine Neceſſity of ſpeaking out his Praiſe, and ſetting Him on high, will ly upon it: Now Now there are two ſpecial times, when Chriſtians are put to a divine *Non-plus* in ſpeaking out his Praiſe, and are conſtrained to cry out that word, Pſal. 65. 1. *Praiſe waiteth for thee*, (or is ſilent) that is, it cannot be expreſſed. There is that time, when a Chriſtian is caught up, as it were, unto the Third Heavens, and hath ſome eminent diſcoveries of God; then he is conſtrained to cry out, *Exalt thy ſelf, O Lord*; his thoughts are ſo high of him, that there can be no expreſſions found ſuitable

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unto his worth; And we confeſs indeed, it is hard, if not impoſſible, to commit any *Hyperbole* in commending of him. And there is that *Second* time, when Chriſtians are able to turn the Battle to the Gate, and in ſome meaſure are enabled to conquer their Spiritual Enemies; then are they put to this, Who can exalt him, who is by infinite degrees exalted above our bleſſing and praiſe? Sometimes a Chriſtian is put to that Spiritual Poſture and Heavenly Frame, that he cannot make language of his thoughts of *Chriſt*, that though his heart could indite a good matter concerning the King, yet his tongue cannot be the Pen of a ready Writer.

There is a *Fourth* Evidence of a Chriſtians growth, when he hath more Spiritual Diſcoveries of, and Inſight into his Corruptions, and is more wreſtling againſt them. And we would have you conſidering theſe *two* things, 1. That diſcovery of boſome and inviſible Luſts, is that which we mainly take to be meant in this Evidence, and wreſtling againſt them; And there is this, 2. That all our victories over our Luſts, ſhould increaſe our antipathy againſt Sin, and make us to be zealous, till once we ſhall obtain a compleat Victory, and ſhall have accompliſhed our Warfare.

There is a *Fifth* Evidence of our growth, *viz.* When the remembrance of our former Luſts and Idols, do not provoke deſires after the enjoyment of thoſe things again, but rather doth provoke the exerciſe of Sorrow, that ever that ſhould have been our lot, to have been under the dominion of ſuch Luſts and Idols: O! But there be many, to whom remembrance of their Luſts will provoke their Affections, *Ezek.* 23. 19,21. And this ſpeaks much ſtrength of Love to them, that the picture of his Idols ſhould ſo much inflame and gain his affections; O! But looking upon our old ſins with an affectionate eye, ſpeaks little growth in Mortification. There is this *Laſt* Evidence of our growth, *viz.* high and Majeſtick thoughts of Chriſt and his Word, for if once our humours be purged out, we ſhall then *as new-born babes, deſire the ſincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby*; And I am perſwaded,

perſwaded, that as one doth obtain ſucceſſe in this precious Warfare, he doth aſcend in his ſpiritual conceptions of *Chriſt*; ſuch a one is endeavouring that evangelick and Heavenly Captivity of affections, to have them all confined unto *Jeſus Chriſt*, that precious & excellent Object: O! but one ſight of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in his matchleſs and tranſcendent Comlineſs, to behold that Divine Contemperature, Harmony and Conjunction of all Spiritual Graces that are in him, would it not provoke us to caſt away our Idols to the Moles and to the Batts? And ſhould they not loſe their beautiful hue and image? O but eternally to contemplate that infinite Majeſty that is in him, ſweetly contemperat with his lowlineſſe, ſo that we may ſay, There is both Majeſtick lowlineſſe, and lowly Majeſty in him; to ſee likewiſe his infinite highneſs, and his matchleſs condeſcendency, to ſee his abſolute Soveraignty, and his unparallel'd Humility, thoſe things if once they were attained, might make us to cry out, *Who would not love thee, O King of Nations.*

Now that which we ſhall *laſtly* ſpeak to, ſhall be to ſhew unto you thoſe things that ſpeak and prove our ſoul-union, & heart-conjunction with our Idols, that ſo we may be provoked to the Mortification of them; There is this firſt, that we embrace our Idols after frequent convictions of the diſadvantages of them, that after they have been ſeen in their own native colours, yet we dandle them upon our knee, as you have it, *Iſa.* 57. 10. and Jer. 50. 38. *They are mad upon their Idols*, demented in their purſuits after them: And no doubt this ſpeaks a moſt unmortified frame, and one filled with the love of his Idols. There is this *Secondly*, that ſpeaks it, our imbraeing of our Idols upon ſmall tentations, like that, 2 *Sam.* 12. 2, 3. There are ſome tentations of our Luſts to gain our affections, and ſome to gain our judgment; And to ſin without the propoſal of ſome great advantage, or ſome ſolacing delight or pleaſure, ſpeaks us moſt ſtrongly united to our Luſts. There is this *Thirdly*, that ſpeaks it, that infinite toyl and labour that we expoſe our ſelves to, to ſatisfie our Luſts: you

will ſee this, *Eccle.* 2. where *Solomon* making Pleaſure and Carnal Joy his Idol, is put to much toyl to ſatisfie it; and believe it, It is more eaſie to mortifie your Luſts, than to ſatisfie them; for that is an impoſſible work. Our Idols have two daughters that ſtill cry, *Give, give*: Our Idols are like the Grave, the barren Womb, the Earth that is not filled with Water, and the Fire, who never cry, *It is enough*: Our Idols have two Attendants, *Impatience* and *Diligence*; We can weary our ſelves in the Fire, to obtain ſatisfaction to our Luſts; and if we do not attain it, we will curſe our King, and look upward. There is this *Fourthly*, that ſpeaks our Soul-union with our Idols, and it is embracing of them, after application of Threatnings againſt thoſe who ſhould embrace that Sin; and yet to commit this Sin with lifted up Hand, is indeed, to ſport with the Juſtice of *God*, or rather to put a Bill of Defiance into his hand, ſuppoſing that we are above the reach of his Juſtice and Power. And there is this *Fifthly*, that ſpeaks it, Our killing of Convictions, which tend to the diſcovery of the ſinfulneſs of Sin, and preſſing upon us thoſe Duties, by which we attain to the Mortification of them; and is it not certain, that we kill our Convictions in the birth, and make them to prove Abortive? Love to our Idols is that which kills our Convictions; and our killing of our Convictions, is the mother of our love to our Idols. And there is this, *Laſtly*, that ſpeaks our Soul-union with our Idols; Thoſe anxious Sorrows when we miſs the enjoyment of our Idols, we are then ready to cry out, *It is better for me to die than to live*: And oft-times, when our Idols are taken from us, and are laid in the Grave, our living Luſts ſit down, and lament over the Grave of our buried Idols, crying forth, *Ah my Lord.* And ſince there are ſuch inviſible, and woful knots of union betwixt us and our Idols, we ſhould endeavour to have all theſe knots looſed, and to have our Soul united to Him, by thoſe two precious and golden Chains of *Faith* and *Love*, and to have our Hearts *Bethel*, a Houſe for God, and a Temple for the Holy Ghoſt;

Ghoſt; and not a *Bethaven*, a Houſe of Idols, and a Cage for all unclean Birds, that our ſpirits may be Manſions for that *Eternal Spirit*, and he may have an arbitrary Power over us, and a Negative Voice in conducting us to Heaven.

SERMON III.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Chriſt's, have crucified the Fleſh, with the Affections and Luſts.*

MOrtification is that precious Duty impoſed upon Man, not only by the Law of Nature, but by the Royal and excellent Law of Grace. Doth not the Law and Light of Nature inſtruct Man thus, It is better to kill, than be killed? And certainly, except a Chriſtian be the ruin of his iniquities, Iniquity ſhall certainly be his ruine; We ſhall either ſing a Song of triumph over our Luſts, or our Luſts ſhall ſing a Song of Triumph over us; and doth not that Royal Law of Liberty and Grace enforce this upon us, while it deſireth, that *we ſhould crucifie our members which are upon earth*, and be aſpiring after a divine Conformity to the Image of the inviſible God; Though we conceive, there be ſome, that if they would retire themſelves a little to behold thoſe ſubtile and inviſible actings of the Myſtery of Iniquity within them, and thoſe deep Devices of Satan, and how many ſtrange Lords, beſide *Jeſus Chriſt*, exerciſe Dominion over them; they might be conſtrained to put in their *Amen* unto that Truth, that *It is more eaſie for a Camel to paſs thorow the eye of a needle, than for ſuch unmortified Chriſtians*, as many of us are, *to enter into the Kingdom of God.* It is better for us to dwell in the Houſe of Mourning, than in the Houſe of Mirth: And we may ſay of much of the carnal joy that is amongſt us;

Such laughter is mad, and ſuch mirth what doth it? We may wiſh for ſome retired Cottage in the Wilderneſs, where we may go aſide, and ſpend our ſeventy years in the bitterneſs of our Soul, and account it marvelous loving kindneſs, if we ſhall obtain hope in our end. It is without all debate, That the general and univerſal Evil of our day is, that Chriſtians are ſo little in the exerciſe of this precious grace of Mortification; For now we take a greater latitude in our way to Heaven, than that Cloud of Witneſſes which went before us did adventure to take: And it is certain, that if one of the Damned were admitted to come and write Commentaries on the diſadvantages of ſatisfying the Luſts of the Fleſh, he would point forth marvelous hurt, and infinite loſs to follow on it; As likewiſe, if any from Above were admitted to write upon the advantages of *Crucifying the Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts thereof*; O what precious Commendations would they give to thoſe that are exerciſed in theſe low, but exalting works of Mortification? And, believe me, this is moſt certain, That it is eaſier to mortifie your Luſts, than to ſatisfie them: For we conceive, that ſuch a one who is ſpending his precious time in the ſatisfying of his Luſts, doth ſpend his time betwixt theſe three, the impatience of his Luſts, which ſtill cry forth, *Give, give*; The impotency and weakneſs of the means he hath to ſatisfie ſuch Luſts; and the conviction of the impoſſibiiity of ſatisfying theſe inſatiable deſires of ſin. Anxiety and Sorrow are the conſtant attendants of a man that is not ſtudying to crucifie his Luſts and affections: And certainly, if we may allude to that word Jer. 48. 10. *Curſed be he that keepeth back his ſword from blood*, he is curſed that doth not endeavour to crucifie and bring low the *ſeven abominations of his heart*. We ought to be like *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, who did jeopard their lives unto death in the high places of the field, that there might be none of our luſts to cry forth within us, *The bitterneſſe of death is paſt*; but we might endeavour to cut it in

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pieces before the Lord. We conceive, this work of Mortification, is the moſt pleaſant exerciſe of a Chriſtian, if not in its own nature, yet in its fruits and effects.

Now before we ſhall ſpeak any thing unto thoſe things, which we propoſed to ſpeak of at the laſt occaſion, We ſhall ſpeak a little to this Queſtion, What is the reaſon that Chriſtians reſolutions and purpoſes to quit ſuch a predominant Luſt, and to forſake ſuch an Idol, do oftimes evaniſh without any fruit? For theſe Cords of divine Reſolution by which they bind themſelves, are but as Tow and Flax before the Fire of Temptation, they decreeing many things which are not eſtabliſhed: And we confeſs, This is ſo incident an evil to his own, that ſometimes they are reſolved in nothing ſo much, as to reſolve no more; they in a manner give over the duty of Reſolution, becauſe they are ſo ſhort-coming in the duty of Performance: And 1. we conceive, this is occaſioned either through this, that Chriſtians do not reſolve upon the ſtrength of a Mediator; or if they do reſolve upon his ſtrength, they are not much in the improvement of it, for the bringing low of ſuch an Iniquity. And we conceive, this was the ground that *Peter*'s reſolutions were ſo much blaſted; and this is ſomewhat pointed at, *Iſa.* 40. 30,31. where it is ſaid, *Even the Youths ſhall faint, and be weary, and the Young Men ſhall utterly fall*; The greateſt Natural Abilities which might help men to run and not be weary, and the moſt promiſing Evidences from themſelves, ſhall fail and be blaſted; but [*verſ.* 31] *They that wait upon the Lord, ſhall renew their ſtrength*, even thoſe who are denied to their own ſtrength. We conceive, that there are theſe *two* great myſteries in Chriſtianity; Firſt, To reſolve ſo as being convinced that we are not able, as of our ſelves, to think one good thought: And next, to believe that *Chriſt*'s ſtrength laid hold on by Faith, is as effectual for the crucifying ſuch a Luſt, as if it were our own proper ſtrength and excellency: I ſhall only ſay this by the way, Study to flee comparative Reſolutions, for ordinarily

dinarily these are soon blasted; as was clear in *Peter*, *Though all shall forsake thee, yet I will not*: Study to be positive in your Resolutions, but beware of comparison: [2.] This fruitlesness of Resolution is likewise occasioned through this, That ordinarily they determine the mortifying of such a Lust rather with their Light, than with their Affections; As it is sometimes the exercise of a Christian, when he goeth to Prayer for the mortifying of such a Lust, his Light prayeth more than his Affections; yea sometimes it happens that when light or judgment is praying for the mortifying of such an Idol, affection, as it were, entereth a Protestation against the granting of such a desire, and in a manner saith, *Lord mortifie not such a Lust*. This we conceive was the case and practice of those who are made mention of, *Ezek.* 14.4,5. who came to enquire of the Lord, having their Idols in their heart: We may put our Idols out of our light, but have them in our heart, when we come to seek the mortification of them: And we would only say this unto you, When ye begin to resolve, Study to have your Souls under a divine impression of the sinfulness of such a Lust, as likewise, under the infinite disadvantage of following such a Lust: We conceive, That the ordinary time of a Christians Resolution is, when he is blessed with the dew of Heaven, and is admitted to taste of his sweetness. And [3.] oft-times a Christians resolutions are rather according to his present frame, than according to that which probably will be his frame ere long: And this is the cause, that Christians, who are big in their Resolutions, are often short and defective in their Performances; or [4.] it is occasioned through their being too much given to Slothfulness, and that woful Idol of Self-indulgence; they resolve fair, but do not take pains to accomplish their Vows: This is clearly pointed at, not only *Prov.* 13. 4. where it is said, *The Sluggard desireth, but he hath nothing*; but more clearly, *Prov.* 21.25. *The desire of the Sluggard slayeth him*, and the reason is subjoyned, *Because his hands refuse to labour*: It is most certain, That except a Christian be diligent, he can ne-

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ver be a mortifying Chriſtian: Mortification is not attained with eaſe, we muſt travel in pain, and have the pangs of the new-birth, before *Chriſt be formed in us.* [5.] This, *Laſtly*, doth occaſion it, *viz.* Chriſtians do not propoſe to themſelves a ſublime and divine end in mortifying of their Luſts; And certainly we conceive this is a moſt ordinary and incident caſe, We either propoſe this end in mortifying of our Luſts, that we may have ſomewhat whereof to glory, and to make mention of our righteouſneſs, *even of ours only*; or elſe we propoſe this carnal end, of ſtudying to have a name continually amongſt the living in *Jeruſalem*, leſt that inward myſtery of iniquity, that is within us, be engraven on our Fore-heads; And I think certainly, that name may be engraven upon many Profeſſors in this age, which *Jude* giveth them, *Verſ.* 12. of his Epiſtle, he calleth them *Twice dead*, that is, not only dead in reality, but that through the deceitfulneſs of Sin, they had even loſt any name of living they likewiſe had, ſo that it was alſo evaniſhed and gone away. I am perſwaded, that were we known each one to another, as we are known to him, *who hath thoſe ſeven eyes, that run too and fro through the earth*; no doubt, we would wonder at the boldneſs of each others hope, and laugh at the ſtrength of his deluſions.

Now that which we propoſed to ſpeak of from the words, was to point out ſome advantages which a Chriſtian hath by mortifying of his Luſts, and by being continually exerciſed in this precious Warfare; And (as we cleared at the laſt occaſion) the firſt advantage of a Mortifying Chriſtian was this, ordinarily ſuch a Chriſtian doth live under the impreſſion of his intereſt in *God*, he is admitted to read his name written in the Book of Life, as is clear from Rev. 2. 17. where he ſaith, *To him that overcometh will I give a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name written, which no man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it*: as likewiſe from Rev. 2. 11. *He that overcometh ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death*: as alſo from 2 *Tim.* 4 8. Where theſe two are ſweetly

conjoyned and linked together: and it muſt certainly be ſo, that a mortifying Chriſtian is one that liveth under the divine impreſſion of his intereſt in *God*, not only becauſe of this, that one who is not mortifying his luſts, doth darken his hope and obſcure his evidence; every dayes intermiſſion of Mortification, being (as it were) a ſcore drawn through the extract of our peace with God, ſo that in proceſs of time, that precious extract of peace becometh illegible to us: And we ſhall ſay this, that a Chriſtian who can keep the faith of his intereſt, without the exerciſe of Mortification, may ſuſpect the reality of ſuch aſſurance: Mortification and aſſurance die and live together, are weak and ſtrong together. Moreover it muſt be ſo, becauſe of this, that ordinarily *God* rewardeth a mortifying Chriſtian with the intimation of his Peace, he takes him in to ſee the eternal purpoſes of his heart, and the ſecrets of his counſel, and lets him ſee his name written in the Records of heaven, leſt he ſhould faint in the day of adverſity, and ſo prove his ſtrength to be but ſmall: Did ye never know ſuch a thing as this when moſt ſerious in the exerciſe of Mortification, to be admitted to behold that precious and everlaſting hope?

There is this *Second* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by being continually exerciſed in this bleſſed Warfare, and it is this, Mortification keeps all the graces of the Spirit in action and exerciſe; It is that ſuperiour wheel, at the motion of which, all the inferiour wheels do move: and if we may ſo ſpeak, Mortification is all the graces of the Spirit combined in one, and exerciſing themſelves as in one divine act. [1.] *Faith* is exerciſed by a Mortifying Chriſtian, not only, in drawing furniture from *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is our Head; but likewiſe, in that it is that defenſive piece of Armour, (*the ſhield of Faith*) by which we quench the fiery darts of the Devil: This War will not proceed with much advantage, if Faith be out of the field. [2.] The Grace of *Hope* is exerciſed by a Mortifying Chriſtian, for this is its exerciſe in this bleſſed Warfare, to hold up the Crown of immortal

Glory

Glory in its right Hand, with this *Motto* engraven upon it, *He that perſevereth to the end ſhall be ſaved, and ſhall obtain this Crown of life*, which is the great encouragement of a Chriſtian in this Exerciſe. [3.] The Grace of *Watchfulneſs* is exerciſed in this bleſſed Warfare: for Watchfulneſs is the Centinel of the Chriſtian, that ſtandeth upon the Watch-Tower, and giveth him warning of the motions of his adverſary; Watchfulneſs warneth us, when firſt Corruption begins to ſtir in us. [4.] The Grace of *Love* is much exerciſed in this bleſſed Warfare; For when a Chriſtian beholds that divine and unſearchable Compaſſion of *Jeſus Chriſt* which he exerciſeth towards him, in upholding under ſtraits, ſo that when the Archers ſhoot at him, and grievouſly wound him, that yet his Bow abides in its ſtrength, this makes the Grace of Love to burn within the Soul. And *Laſtly* The Grace of *Prayer* is much exerciſed in this bleſſed Warfare; For when Faith is like to faint, and Hope begins to loſe its courage; when Watchfulneſs is like to ſlumber, and Love begins to be remiſs, and to wax cold; then Prayer, as a flying *Cherub*, doth go to the Captain of our Salvation, and deſires him to help in the day of need: Prayer is the ſweet correſpondent of the Chriſtian betwixt Heaven and Earth; *Prayer* ſtayeth upon the Mount with *Chriſt*, when *Faith* and *Watchfulneſs* are in fight with our Corruptions and Luſts: And by the way, I know not whether a Chriſtian be more obliged to *Jeſus Chriſt* for Juſtification, than for Sanctification; But we conceive it is better to conjoin thoſe together, than to compare them one with another.

There is this *Third* Advantage that a mortifying Chriſtian hath; ſuch a Chriſtian doth moſt ordinarily meet with moſt Divine Solace and intimate Communion and Fellowſhip with *God*; Would ye know the reaſon why you have not been in Heaven theſe many days? It is this, Ye have not been fighting theſe many days. For the mortifying Chriſtian is admitted to taſte of the honey out of the rock, and to be ſatisfied with the fineſt of the Wheat. Now this is clear from *Rev.*2.17. where that Promiſe

Promiſe is given to the mortifying Chriſtian, that *He ſhall taſte of the hidden Manna*, which is the ſweetneſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*: as likewiſe, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye through the Spirit mortifie the deeds of the Fleſh, ye ſhall live*: as alſo *Rom.*7.24. compared with *ver.* 25. where wreſtling *Paul* hath Songs of everlaſting Praiſe put in his mouth: Would ye know the perſon that is admitted to ſing one of the Songs of *Zion*, while he is in a ſtrange land? It is the Mortifying Chriſtian: For when he is in the purſuit of his enemies, he is then admitted to put out his finger, and taſte of the honey, that his eyes may be enlightened. There is a Mortification that is pleaded for by many in theſe days, whoſe higheſt advancement doth not conſiſt in true Mortification, which is in knowing and being convinced of Sin, and mourning over it; But this is their Mortification, that one ſhould be dead to the ſenſe and conviction of Sin; we ſhall paſs no other verdict upon ſuch *Antinomian* Mortification, but only this, it is indeed the Mortification of Godlineſs, it is a crucifying of Repentance and Holineſs, it is a killing of the New-man within a Chriſtian, as alſo it is a quickening of the Old-man in its Luſts and Affections; this Mortification is no other thing but Satan transformed in to an Angel of Light; and yet this is a piece of that new-coined Goſpel, that is ſo much preached up in theſe days, which if an Angel from Heaven ſhould bring, we ought not to believe it: This is no new Light, but old Darkneſs covered over with the vail of a glittering light. O! Study to be much under the impreſſion of the bitterneſs of Sin, that ſo ye may taſte of the conſolations of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

There is this *Fourth* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by being continually exerciſed in this Warfare, *viz.* that ſuch a Chriſtian hath diſtinct and perfect diſcoveries, not only of the deceitfulneſs of his own heart, but alſo of the ſubtilty of corruption and ſin that doth aſſault him: a mortifying Chriſtian is a moſt experienced Chriſtian: As is clear *Rom.*7. throughout where wreſtling *Paul* hath ſuch diſtinct diſcoveries of himſelf, as he ſaith there, he

he ſaw a Law in his members, rebelling againſt the Law of his mind, and bringing him into ſubjection. And certainly, there is much precious Advantage that redounds unto the Chriſtian by being convinced of the deceitfulneſs of his own heart, and of that myſtery of iniquity that is within him, for ſuch a Chriſtian doth attain to the exerciſe of the grace of humility, for when he beholdeth himſelf as in a glaſs, he cryeth forth, *Wo is me, I am undone*; I think it is in ſome ſenſe lawful for Chriſtians to practiſe much of *Peters* Divinity, which he had, Luk. 5. 8. *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man*; Not that it was well argued by him, but it ſpake forth the high apprehenſions he had of the Holineſs of God, and the low apprehenſions he had of himſelf: As likewiſe ſuch a Chriſtian is much denied to his own ſtrength, and ſo is neceſſitate to go unto one, on whom his ſtrength is laid; as likewiſe ſuch a Chriſtian is much in the exerciſe of the Grace of Watchfulneſs; he is not ignorant of the devices of Satan, which make him to ſtand continually upon his guard, leſt he be overtaken with the ſnare of the Devil.

There is this *Fifth* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by being much in the exerciſe of Mortification, he doth attain to much divine Conformity with God, and is made a partaker of the Divine Nature: this is clear from *Revel.* 3. 5. where that promiſe, *I will cloath him in white*, is in part accompliſhed to a Chriſtian, even while he is in this Valley of Tears. And certainly, this is the *compend* and ſweet *Epitome* of all Chriſtian Advantages, to be made like unto the Majeſty of God; And it is not a conformity unto him for a day, but ſuch a mortifying Chriſtian is moſt conſtant in keeping the Divine Lineaments, and Spiritual Characters of that precious Image undefaced in him; as is promiſed, *Rev.* 3. 12. *Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out*: And certainly that Promiſe of Stability, is in a part accompliſhed to a Chriſtian, even while he is here below: What could a Chriſtian deſire more than this, to be admitted to partake of the image

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of the inviſible God, and to be made like unto Him?

There is this *Laſt* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath, by being continually exerciſed in this precious work of Mortification, that he hath his *antipathy* and hatred againſt Sin much increaſed: Would you know the Chriſtian that liveth under the impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of Sin? It is the mortifying Chriſtian. I think that vain diſtinction which Papiſts have of *Mortal* and *Venial* ſins, Chriſtians in their practice do too much allow and commend; There are ſome Sins ſeem *venial* to them, which to commit and exerciſe, they take a latitude to themſelves, as may be clear in this; a Chriſtian will, without much difficulty, if he be not tender, commit ſuch things as are not conſiſtent with the exerciſe of Grace within him; he needs no other toleration but this, to have this made out to him, That there is a conſiſtency betwixt ſuch a Luſt, and the living, Spiritual nature of Grace within him: But, no doubt, if we argued right, we would be provoked to deſiſt from Sin, even from the conſideration of the diſadvantages that attend the purſuing after any Luſt.

Now that which we ſhall ſpeak to next, ſhall be to ſhew, what diſadvantages a Chriſtian hath by an interruption of this Spiritual Warfare, and not being much taken up in the exerciſe of Mortification. If this Queſtion were propoſed to many, When did you laſt ſet ſome hours apart to mortifie your Sins? The moſt part would be put to a *Non-plus*, not knowing the laſt time when they were exerciſed in this precious Warfare. And I would only ſay this, A Chriſtian that can interrupt the work of Mortification for ſome Weeks together, may either fear that Grace is groaning within him, with the groanings of a deadly wounded man; or elſe, that he is not at all begotten unto a lively hope: For there is no diſcharge in this Warfare, but fight we muſt, till once the one foot be within that Palace of Everlaſting Delight.

There is this *Second* diſadvantage that attendeth a Chriſtian who interrupteth this Warfare, ordinarily ſuch

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an one doth contract much hardneſs and impenitence of heart; This was clear in the Practice of *David*, who when he once intermitted this war, could write a letter to the killing of godly *Uriah*, and yet no mention made of ſmiting of heart: This is certainly a conſtant attendant of one who is not mortifying himſelf, he maketh his heart *die as a ſtone within him*: The mortifying Chriſtian keeps this holy zeal within him, *he hateth the garments ſpotted with the fleſh*: Would ye read the original and riſe of hardneſs of heart in theſe dayes amongſt us? It is this, Chriſtians are not much in the exerciſe of Mortification; I believe the Goſpel hath been preached nigh ſix thouſand years, and yet it is much to be doubted, if ever miſbelief, and hardneſs of heart were ſo univerſal diſeaſes among Chriſtians as in theſe dayes: We imagine to go to Heaven by gueſs, which maketh us ſo little intend this bleſſed Work.

There is this *Third* Diſadvantage, that a Chriſtian meets with, by the intermiſſion of this Warfare; and it is this, That ordinarily ſuch a Chriſtian hath his Luſts moſt reigning and lively within him: Sin will gather more ſtrength by the interruption of one days Exerciſe of Mortification, than ye can prevail over, by wreſtling with it many days: This is that ſubtil dexterity of Sin, it can recruit it ſelf in few hours with much eaſe: And certainly, if ye be not conſtant in this Warfare, its like ye will not ſing many Songs of Triumph over your Luſts: He muſt be conſtant in the fight, who would be a Triumpher in the fight: How long is it ſince ye ſet up an *Eben-ezer* to God, ſaying, *Hitherto hath he helped me?* And when did ye ſet up Trophies and Monuments of your Victory? We think the Chriſtians of this age leave feweſt and leaſt Trophies of their Victory, in the way to Heaven, of any that ever went before them.

There is this *Fourth* Diſadvantage which a Chriſtian hath, by the intermiſſion of this Warfare; and it is this, That ordinarily ſuch a Chriſtian liveth without ſight of victory, and overcoming at the laſt: A Chriſtian who interrupteth this Exerciſe of Mortification, fighteth as

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we ſpeak, with a doubtful War, not having determined whether the fight ſhall be in his favour, or not; There is ſomewhat of this pointed out, 1 *Tim.* 4.8. where *Paul* fighting in an Agony, as the word importeth, perſuadeth himſelf that he ſhall have that Crown of Righteouſneſs, which is the ſuitable reward of a conquering Chriſtian: And, believe me, I know not what ſhall afford a Chriſtian more *Chriſtian* Peace and Conſolation than this, to believe, that *God ſhall put all enemies under his feet, and make them his footſtool* at laſt.

There is this *Fifth* Diſadvantage, that a Chriſtian interrupting the Exerciſe of Mortification hath, and it is this, That ordinarily ſuch an one, when he is paſſing thorow the firſt and ſecond Gates of Death, and is to render up an account of his Stewardſhip, he hath leaſt perſwaſion of his intereſt in God. Would ye know the reaſon why Chriſtians die with ſo little Faith of Evidence? It is this, They have not been much in the Exerciſe of Mortification. Certainly the Conviction of ſhort-coming in this Duty, and the apprehenſion of Eternity, and of approaching Judgment, are two ſweet companions together: I think, next to Juſtification and Faith in *Jeſus Chriſt*, which is the hinge of all our conſolation, a Chriſtian hath moſt peace in the work of Mortification, in the Day when he ſhall be ſtanding upon that utmoſt line betwixt Time and Eternity. O! What conſolation had old *Paul*, when he ſpake theſe words, when he was ready to be diſſolved, *I have fought the good fight of Faith*; I doubt much, if ever *Paul* ſang a Song of Praiſe upon an higher key, than when he ſung that Song, 2 Tim. 4.8. *I have fought the good fight of Faith*: *Paul*'s heart was half tranſported, when he did reflect upon this, that all his Luſts were dying, and killed at his feet.

And there is this *Laſt* Diſadvantage that attends a Chriſtian, who interrupts this Warfare, That ordinarily he is much blaſted of God in the Exerciſe of other Graces; Yea more, he is blaſted in the Exerciſe

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of Gifts; these two losses will attend a Christian who interrupts this Warfare. And certainly, if a Christian be blasted in Grace, and be not blasted in Gifts, it is one of the sorest strokes that can befall him; for ordinarily, It is a Pillow sewed under our Arm-holes, which maketh us pursue Sin without fear: this is secretly hinted at *Eccles.* 2.9. where that which made *Solomon* rove after his Idols, was this, *Also my wisdom remained with me:* he was as wise a man now, as he was before. And certainly, when Gifts are vigorous and Graces not, such may sit down astonished, lamenting over themselves for *seven nights and seven daies.*

Now before we shut up our Discourse, we shall speak a little for consolation to those who are somewhat serious in accomplishing this Warfare, and yet have not sensible advantage, nor success over their Lusts, who have been toiling all night, and yet have catched nothing; And we conceive, that God doth ordinarily propose to a tender Christian these three divine ends, in cutting out to them such a lot: (1) That he may be kept in a constant correspondence with the Throne of Grace; He in a manner wounds us in our Leg, that we may not wander much abroad from his Throne: And certainly, Christians may be convinced of this, That if they had their will in Mortifying, they would not be much in Corresponding; which may be demonstrated unto you thus; because that which provoketh one to converse with God, is rather a Principle of Necessity, than a Principle of Love: A Christian will go *six* times to Prayer, yea many times, from a Principle of Necessity, before he go twice from a Principle of Love and Delight. Secondly, That the Christians Faith may be exercised, and put to trial, Whether or no he will believe and rest upon him, notwithstanding that he see not Mortification growing within him. We confess, our little advancement in Mortification, is the foundation of misbelief: And certainly, to his own, God hath this design, even the trial of their grace, whether or no they will believe, and *hope against hope.* Thirdly, The Lord doth it, because he knoweth that

that a Chriſtian can better improve his little advancement in Mortification, than he can improve his great ſucceſs: Believe me, a Chriſtians advancement in Grace is more difficult to be born, than his little advancement and progreſs in Grace; And the great reaſon of it is, becauſe ordinarily Pride and Arrogancy do bloſſom and ſpring up from the ſenſe of our Attainments; For what doth decreaſe to a Chriſtian of the Luſt of the Eye, and of the Fleſh, ſeem to accreaſe to the Pride of Life; For as the one ſeemeth to go down, the other doth aſcend up. Now I ſuppoſe there be many here, who never knew what it was to feel any ſuch change all their life, neither what Prayer and Mortification mean; And to theſe I ſay, O! Did you never know what it was to be under the impreſſion of the Sinfulneſs of Sin? Or did you never know what it was to water your Couch with Tears, under the impreſſion of it? as *Pſal.* 32.3. where *David* ſaith, *When I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long.* Which word *roaring* implies not only this, That ſometimes a Chriſtian doth rather mourn as a beaſt, than complain as a man, (*roaring* being the voice of a beaſt:) but likewiſe it implies this, That ſometimes Chriſtians are under ſuch an Exerciſe, that the open field is a more fit place for them, than the ſecret retirements of their moſt quiet Chambers. *David* was forced to roar as a beaſt, when the bones, which are the pillars of his houſe, were waxing old and mouldering within him: Certainly, the day is coming, when ye who never knew what it was to crucifie a Luſt, *Chriſt* ſhall crucifie you upon that croſs of everlaſting pain, when He who is moſt High ſhall tread you in the Wine-preſs of his Wrath, when He ſhall make the Arrows of his Indignation ſharp upon you; Ye who will not quit ſin, Sin ſhall once be your eternal Companion; Chriſt hath been inviting you very often to quit ſuch Luſts, and ye return ſo often a negative anſwer to him, this will be the ſentence, which ſhall be paſt upon you, *Be it unto you, even as you will; They are joyned to Idols, let them alone;* and certainly, when Chriſt ceaſeth to be a reprover, that man

man is in a ſad and deſperat eſtate. O! that ye might once fight this good Fight of faith: but oh your ſcent doth remain with many of you! are there not many here, who never knew what it was to ſpend one hour in ſecret wreſtling and debating with their Luſts? The ſtrong man keeps the houſe, and ſo all is at peace with them, there is no going out, nor coming in at the gates of their city, but the Luſts are, as it were, exactors of that houſe, and they bear ſway within it. But O! curſed be that peace which ſhall end in everlaſting War with God. Would ye know the exerciſe and caſe of thoſe who are in everlaſting chains? We can repreſent it under nothing ſo fit as this, it is infinite Juſtice and infinite Omnipotency, threſhing and cruſhing finite and ſinful man; Divine wrath ſtill coming down upon his body, and ſoul; They are now living the life of an endleſs death, and are ſpending their days in a dying life; for they ſhall be eternally dying, and yet never able to die. Are there not ſome of you, who are ſo joyned to your Idols, that if *Dives* ſhould come from Hell, and preach this Text to you, *Crucifie your Luſts*, Ye would ſtop your ears at that precious exhortation. Ye may hide ſin under your Tongue now, but be perſuaded, that at laſt it ſhall be in your Belly as the poiſon of Aſps, and as the venome of Dragons. And we would leave this advice and counſel upon Chriſtians, who have begun this precious Warfare, *Stand faſt in the Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made you free, and be not entangled again into that yoke of bondage.* Sin is a yoke that neither we, nor our fathers were able to bear; and we deſire you to meditate upon this advice, Study to be as much in Mortification, and in the exerciſe of this Duty, as if ye were to obtain Salvation by Works; but withal, Study to be as much denied unto thoſe things, and to have as low an eſteem of your ſelves, as if ye had done nothing at all: Study to work as one that is a *legaliſt* indeed, as one deſiring to maintain good Works; but ſtudy Self-denial, as one having fled for refuge unto that bleſſed hope that is ſet before you. *Chriſt* is ſtanding at the end of the walk of

a Mortifying Christian, with a Crown in his right Hand, and he desireth us to persevere unto the end, that we may obtain that immortal *Crown*: O! one day with precious *Christ*, shall be an infinite recompence of all our toil; and the more exercise of Mortification you are put to now, Heaven will be the more sweet and delightsome unto you hereafter.

SERMON IV.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christ's, have crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts.*

SUch is that universal Stupidity and Hardness of Heart that hath overtaken the Professors of this Generation, that if *Christ* would come from Heaven, and read over unto us the compleat roll of our Iniquities, and shew unto us those Records, in which all our wanderings are written, the most part of us would not be much affected, nor much in the exercise of Sorrow. No doubt, It is easier for a Camel to pass thorow the eye of a Needle, than for stupid Christians, such as we are, to enter into the Kingdom of *God*. It is one of the mysteries of his overcoming Grace, that he hath not broken these two precious staves of beauty and bands amongst us; that he hath not broken the Covenant of his peace, and ceased to entertain so near a relation betwixt himself and us. As likewise, it is a mystery of His love, that we are not made eternal Monuments of the Justice of *God*, and this *Motto* engraven upon us, *Behold these that made not God their refuge*: *God* is glorious in the exercise of all his holy Attributes, but in none more, than in the exercise of his Patience and Long-suffering towards

towards us; And in a manner He darkeneth the glory of his Juſtice, and caſteth a Vail over his ſpotleſs Holineſs, that the exerciſe of the Attribute of Patience and Long-ſuffering, may be rendered more conſpicuous. I only poſe you with this Queſtion, Is not Mortification a myſtery unto your practice? and O, Can ſuch a deluſion as this overtake you, That ye ſhall reign with *Chriſt*, though your Luſts reign with you as long as you are here? It is certain, that Mortification is that precious Exerciſe in which ye ought to be taken up: And I conceive, that there is only this difference betwixt ſinning againſt Light, and that unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; that the ſinning againſt Light, is a ſinning againſt the common Work of the Spirit upon your underſtanding; but the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is alſo a Sin againſt the *common* work of the Spirit upon the Affections; and no doubt, there is a near bordering betwixt theſe two, it is the firſt ſtep by which ye go up and aſcend unto the acting of this great Sin. It is a faithful Saying (ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*) that *if we die with Chriſt, we ſhall alſo reign with him*; And we may likewiſe ſay, It is a faithful Saying, That if we be not with Chriſt, and conformed unto him in his Sufferings, we cannot be conformed unto him in the power of his Reſurrection; Ye are all willing to take *Chriſt* as a *Juſtifier*, and as a *Saviour*, but unwilling to take him as a *Sanctifier*, and as a *Prince*: But know this, That the Gifts of this ſpotleſs Lamb are ſo ſweetly linked together, that they are like his own Coat that was upon his body, which was without ſeam, and could not be divided: And ſo, except the whole Gifts of *Jeſus Chriſt* fall unto us by Divine lot, we can have no part nor portion therein: This Mortification is the *compend* of Chriſtianity; And certainly, a Chriſtian reading theſe words, may ſtand amazed, and be aſhamed at his own ſtupidity, that an intereſt in *Chriſt* ſhould be connected with ſuch a ſmall degree of Mortification; though we conceive there be many who take to themſelves the name of Chriſtians, that never knew what it was to exerciſe themſelves in Mortification.

I ſhall yet again (before I come to that which mainly we intend to ſpeak to) preſs this grace of Mortification upon you by theſe things. *Firſt*, This may enforce this duty of Mortification of luſts on you; It is impoſſible for one to ſatisfy his luſts let him accompliſh never ſo diligent a ſtudy to ſatisfy them; therefore ye ſhould be undeceived and convinced of that deluſion: ye conceive that if your luſts had their deſire, they would be ſatisfied, but that is moſt clearly found to be falſe, Pſal 78. 29, 30. Where it is ſaid of their luſts, *they got their hearts deſire*, and a ſad word is ſubjoyned, *yet they were not eſtranged from their luſts*. Let a covetous man ſuppoſe with himſelf, that upon the having of ſo many thouſands, his luſt of covetouſneſs would be ſatisfied, but *Job* doth refute this, chap. 20. 22. ſaying, *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, he ſhall be in ſtraits*: So it is eaſier to mortifie our luſts, than to ſatisfie them. And (2.) we ſay, that though ye hide ſin under your tongue, and though it be ſweet unto you, yet know that the day is approaching when it ſhall be in your bowels, as the gall of Aſpes, and as the poyſon of Dragons: know this for a certainty, that the momentany pleaſures of ſin which they afford unto you, are not worthy to be compared with that eternal weight of unſupportable miſerie that ſhall be inflicted upon you. O! but it is a terrible ſight to behold *a living God* entring eternally in the liſts with a poor ſinful ſinner, to have omnipotency and juſtice fighting againſt the duſt of his feet. And *Laſtly* we ſay, that not exerciſing your ſelves conſtantly in this precious work of Mortification, doth interrupt much precious fellowſhip; that you might have with *Chriſt*; ye that are taſting the ſweetneſs of Sin, cannot taſte of the ſweetneſs of Heaven: This is clear, *Rom.* 8. 13. where Mortifiers have this Promiſe, that *They ſhall live*. And I ſhall onely ſay this by the way, we conceive it to be a queſtion that is difficult to determine, Whether it be more for the advantage of one, that is under any predominant Luſt, to have the objects upon which it feeds withdrawn, or to have them to feed upon: As for inſtance, If one be under the wofull predominancy of

of Pride, It is a queſtion, whether to want the occaſion to exerciſe and feed that Luſt, be better, or to have it: Proud *Achitophel*, when he wanted the objects upon which his pride did feed, went and ſtrangled himſelf: When we enjoy them, O! what ſecret Idolatry, what deſperat Atheiſm do we commit in the ſecret Temples of our Heart, and in the Chambers of our Imagery? O therefore Mortifie more, or ye ſhall pray leſs.

Now that which we intend mainly to ſpeak to, is that *ſecond* thing which we propoſed from the Text; *viz.* The extent of Mortification, that ſuch muſt not only crucifie their predominant Luſts, here called *Affections*, becauſe they are Idols, and linked together by that Paſſion of Love; But likewiſe they ought to mortifie the firſt motions and ſtirrings of corruption, and all occaſions to it, which are here called *Luſts*. And moreover, one that is a Spiritual Mortifier, muſt mortifie Original Sin, which is here called *the Fleſh*, as oft-times it hath that name in Scripture; an exerciſe much unknown to many, if not unto all: We judg Original Sin but a *Zoar*, and it is hard indeed, to be convinced of the Sinfulneſs of Original Sin, and to take it up in its native colours. Now in ſpeaking of the Mortification of Original Sin, we ſhall not inſiſt long upon this; That it is the Duty of a Chriſtian to be exerciſed in the crucifying of this Sin, it being clear, *Col.* 3. 5. where we are commanded *To mortifie our members*, as alſo from the practice of *Paul*, Rom. 7.24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* There is a ſtrong *Emphaſis* in the word *me*, as if *Paul* had ſaid, If infinite Grace could be limited, then, no doubt, ſinful *Paul* were the limits of it.

We ſhall for more clear ſpeaking to this, *Firſt*, Speak a little unto what *Original* Sin is; and we conceive, That it ſtands in theſe; (1.) Original Sin is the imputation of that *firſt* tranſgreſſion of *Adam* unto us, for he being a common and repreſentative perſon, we fell in his Falling: as we would have ſtood, in his Standing. (2.) Original Sin doth comprehend the want of Original

Righteouſneſs, Man being created after that noble pattern and divine *Idea, the Image of God:* But now carrieth only ſomthing of the image of *God* in his Wiſdom, and in his Omnipotency; but while he was in his Primitive Eſtate, he did carry an impreſſion of the Holineſs of *God.* (3.) Original Sin doth comprehend a proneneſs to the committing of all Evil, and an ineptitude and unfitneſs for the doing of any Good, and thus are we all by Nature. The *firſt* part of Original Sin is clear, *Rom.* 5. 12 and 14 *verſes.* And the reſt may be gathered from many places of Scripture, but eſpecially comprehended in that one word, *Eph.* 2. 1. *We were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes:* One can no more move in the acting of any Spiritual Good, than if he were altogether without Life.

We ſhall *Secondly* ſpeak a little to thoſe Advantages that a Chriſtian may have, by being convinced of original ſin: For it is moſt certain, that a Chriſtian is leſs convinced of original Corruption, than he is of any actual tranſgreſſion that doth befal him; And (as we were ſpeaking) the cauſe of it is (1) partly from this, that a Chriſtian taketh not up the ſinfulneſs of original ſin, though it be a ſin having more in it, than is in twenty, yea an hundred actual tranſgreſſions: or (2) it proceedeth from this, that Chriſtians are not convinced of the influence original ſin hath upon all the outward actings of iniquity; it is that fruitful womb that doth alwaies bear twins, and is never barren; it is that root that doth dayly bring forth wormwood and gall: or (3) it doth proceed from this, that we think original ſin is not our own, and that we are not ſo guilty, as if indeed we had eaten this Curſed Apple, which is a groſs Miſtake.

But as to the Advantages of being convinced of Original Corruption, we conceive that there is this *Firſt* Advantage, That it removes impediments of our love to Chriſt, for it is impoſſible for any to have high thoughts of *Jeſus Chriſts* Love, and of the offers of Mercy, unleſs he be convinced of original ſin: Would ye know the reaſon

ſon why *Chriſt* is of ſo ſmall eſteem among you? It is becauſe ye are not convinced of your Original Corruption: This is ſomewhat pointed at, *Rom.* 5. 6,7,8. *verſes*, where the Apoſtle heightening the Love of *Chriſt* in dying for us, he pitches upon this to commend it, our original Corruption, that *we were ſinners and without ſtrength.* O! what a myſtery is the condeſcending grace of *Chriſt* unto a ſinner believing original Corruption; It is as it were, the Foundation upon which all our eſteem doth ariſe and ſpring: there is ſomewhat of this likewiſe pointed at, *Rom.* 7. 24. compared with verſ. 25. where *Paul* beginning to commend free grace, his ſong doth ariſe to the higheſt key, becauſe he hath been convinced of *this body of death that dwelt within him.* I would only ſay this, if you would learn this Divine Leſſon of putting a high accompt upon *Chriſt*, ſtudy original corruption much.

There is this *Second* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath from the conviction of it, and it is this; It doth exceedingly commend the omnipotency of Grace in mortifying Corruption; When was it that *Paul* had the higheſt accompt of the omnipotency of the Grace of *Chriſt*? was it not when he was forc'd to cry out, *O! Wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* compare verſ. 25. And this is certainly pointed at, *Eph.* 2. 1. Where the quickening vertue of Grace, is commended from the object upon which it is exerciſed, *ye that were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, hath he quickned.*

There is this *Third* Advantage, that floweth from Conviction of Original Sin, *viz.* It is a compendious way to Keep the Chriſtian under the exerciſe of Humility, after the higheſt attainments of Mortification, or under the higheſt attainments of communion & fellowſhip with God. Would ye know the cauſe why we are ſo eaſily puft up under ſome ſmall ſucceſs or ſome ſmall meaſure of familiarity with *Chriſt*? It is the want of reflex thoughts upon original corruption within us: therefore I would preſcribe this to Chriſtians under their higheſt advancement by

Grace, to ſit down and ſeriouſly to reflect upon that which they are by Nature, *That their Father is an Amorite, and their Mother an Hittite*, that ſo the rock from whence they are hewn, may preach Humility to them; as *Rom.* 7. 24. where *Paul* under the conviction of Original Sin, calleth himſelf *a wretched man*, and *ver.* 9. of that *Chapter*, where when once Original Sin is diſcovered, *he died* in his own apprehenſions: Were we more in the apprehenſion of this, the wind of the Wilderneſs would not ſo bind us up in her Wings, to the diſſolving of our ſubſtance.

There is a *Fourth* Advantage a Chriſtian hath from the Conviction of Original Corruption, and it is this; it keepeth him under the deepeſt impreſſions of the Sinfulneſs of Sin. I confeſs, that is one of the greateſt myſteries of Chriſtianity, to have our ſoul conſtantly under the impreſſion of the Sinfulneſs of Sin, which we conceive, is impoſſible to be attained without ſolid conviction of Original Corruption: as is hinted at, *Rom.* 7. 13. where *Paul* by the Commandement, having once Original Sin diſcovered, Sin became unto him *exceeding ſinful*: And the reaſon why Original Sin diſcovered hath ſuch influence upon this, is, becauſe ordinarily we conceive, that the actings of Sin do not proceed from our ſelves, but from that *Deceiver of the Brethren*, which *James* doth abundantly refute; for when a man is tempted, *He is enticed by his Luſts.*

There is this *Fifth* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by being convinced of Original Sin; It is an excellent way to keep the Chriſtian under a moſt watchful and fearing frame: Such language had not been heard out of *Hazael*'s mouth, *Am I a dog to commit this*, if he had been convinced of Original Sin; but becauſe he was a ſtranger to this, his Preſumption led him above that which was indeed within him: Therefore, when one is convinced of his proneneſs to act iniquity, of his want of conformity with God, he remembers to ſtand upon his Watch-tower, leſt he be enſnared: This is moſt clearly pointed at, 1 *Cor.* 9. *laſt*, where *Paul* is put to this

this exerciſe, *I bear down my body, and bring it into ſubjection*; and the reaſon is ſubjoyned, Becauſe he was poſſeſſed with a holy jealouſie of himſelf, and entertained a divine ſuſpition, which was conſiſtent with the acting of hope. I know nothing to make a Chriſtian watch over his own heart ſo much as this, to ſee that ſpawn of iniquity which is within him, to behold that fruitful mother of iniquity which never was declared barren, and never ſhall be, till Sin ſhall be no more within his own.

There is this *Sixth* Advantage a Chriſtian hath by being convinced of Original Corruption; It is that which will keep the Soul under the higheſt eſtimation of *Chriſt*, and will make the grace of Love to burn moſt vigorouſly within: O! But when one ſhall reflect upon theſe *two*, The ſpotleſs *Holineſs of Chriſt*, the abſolute purity of that precious Lamb; and ſhall again deſcend to reflect upon theſe myſteries of Iniquity, which are within himſelf, it is no wonder that ſometimes he be put to uſe *Peters* Divinity, to cry out, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man*; but when he improveth the ſight moſt fully, it tends to have his Soul tranſported, and as it were, in a Holy Extaſie of Love, toward that precious and matchleſs One.

And there is this *Laſt* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by being convinced of Original Sin; It is that which putteth a Chriſtian to a holy Diffidence in his own ſtrength, and maketh him to be much in the employment of the ſtrength of him whoſe name is *Jehovah*. What is the reaſon that Chriſtians commit a breach of that firſt Command, ſo much truſting to their own ſtrength, and not making mention of *his righteouſneſs*, and laying hold upon *his ſtrength, even upon his only?* It is this, Becauſe we do not dwell under the conſtant impreſſion of Original Corruption. We conceive it is as great a Myſtery to mens judgment, as it is a Myſtery to their practice, to mortifie it. What made *Paul* ſo much to cry out, *Rom.* 7. 18. diſclaiming his own abi-

lity;

lity; was it not the conviction of Original Sin which was within him, *verſ.* 23?

Now, that which we ſhall *Secondly* ſpeak unto, ſhall be to preſs a little upon you the neceſſity of the Mortification of Original Sin: And we conceive theſe things point out its neceſſity; (1.) That all Mortification is in vain, and as the beating of the air, until once original Corruption be mortified: What is all your Mortification without this? It is, as it were, the lopping off of the branches, while the root doth remain intire; it is a damming up of the ſtreams, whilſt the fountain is ſtill running: and no doubt, that Mortification will eaſily grow vain: Therefore you muſt once mortifie this which is the Mother-ſin. And we would only ſay this by the way, that under correction we conceive, that original ſin is not nor cannot well be mortified in the whole; but only in the members or parts of it, that is, we muſt ſtudy to mortifie ſuch a part of original ſin, ſome living luſts, which are within us, and to be groaning under the reſt; for we conceive, it is hard to take the whole body of original ſin, and to make that the ſubject of Mortification. (2) This ſpeaks forth the neceſſity of Mortification of Original Sin, *viz.* It is an undeniable evidence of a Chriſtian, to be taken up in the mortifying of this ſin: For we conceive it to be impoſſible for a Hypocrite to attain to ſuch a length, as to ſtudy the real Mortification of original Corruption; It was the Practice of theſe two holy men, the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. 24. and of *David*, *Pſal* 51. 5. Where they ſat down to lament over the iniquity which was within them. And the reaſon why the Mortification of original ſin, is an undeniable character and evidence of a Chriſtian, is, not only from this, that one that ſetteth about the Mortification of original ſin, is a Chriſtian that hath moſt diſtinct diſcoveries of himſelf, as alſo of the Holineſs and Spotleſneſs of God. But it is hard to be convinced of original ſin by the Light of Nature, if at all; for to us it is a queſtion, if any can; which the Apoſtle ſeemeth to intimate, Rom. 7. 7. Saying,

I had not known luſt, except the Law had ſaid, Thou ſhalt not covet. (3) This ſpeaks out the neceſſity of the Mortification of Original Corruption, that all the Duties that proceed from a Chriſtian are exceedingly defiled and polluted, except he endeavour the Mortification of this Sin: For this was a Paradox to the Apoſtle *James*, Chap. 3. 11. *That a Fountain at one place ſhall ſend forth bitter water and ſweet:* And till the fountain of Corruption be removed, it is probably to be conceived, That all the actings of Duty by us ſhall be exceedingly polluted. Oh! Original Sin when it lyes without the ſtroke of a Chriſtians Mortification, his Duties will not aſcend with acceptance upon the Altar. And (4.) this pleads the neceſſity of the Mortification of Original Sin, that it is that Sin, which doth exceedingly war againſt the Grace of God in a Chriſtian. Would you know why Grace is in ſuch a languiſhing eſtate? It is becauſe of the power of Original Sin. We conceive this, That the oppoſition of Original Sin to the advancement of Grace, is more inviſible, and the oppoſition of actual Corruption unto the actings of Grace, is more viſible and obvious; But certainly that which doth entangle a Chriſtian in his walk, and maketh him not to aſcend as Pillars of Smoak from this preſent Wilderneſs, is *Original Sin*; this is clear from *Rom.* 7. 23. and *Gal.* 5.17. where *the ſpirit warreth againſt the fleſh, and the fleſh againſt the ſpirit, and theſe two are contrary one to another.*

Now that which *Thirdly*, we ſhall ſpeak concerning the Mortification of Original Sin, ſhall be to ſhew the way how a Chriſtian may be convinced and brought unto the Spiritual impreſſion of Original Sin. And certainly we conceive, that if a Chriſtian ſhall exerciſe himſelf in theſe *three*, he may attain to ſome Spiritual Convictions of this Sin. (1.) Let him be much in the exerciſe of Self-examination, and when he ſhall reflect upon himſelf, he will behold the inviſible motions of iniquity unto every ſin that hath been named among the Gentiles: who is ſo great a ſtranger unto his own heart, but if he reflect

reflect upon it, may ſometimes ſee the ſtirrings of almoſt all unknown corruptions? Which ſpeaketh aloud to the Chriſtian, that there is a fountain and ſpring within him, that would ſend forth the ſame bitter waters, were they not graciouſly reſtrained. (2.) There is this by which a Chriſtian may be brought to the Conviction of Original Sin; & that is, To be much in the exerciſe of the ſtudy of the Spirituality of the Law, which was the way *Paul* attained to the Conviction of Original Sin, *Rom.* 7. It is the ſhort cut by which one may behold that Holineſs of *God*, who impoſeth a command, not only to deſiſt from the actings of Sin, but alſo from the firſt motions and luſts of Sin. (3.) A Chriſtian ſhould be much in the Exerciſe of Prayer; for that Spirit who convinceth the World of Sin, that what you do not know as of your ſelves, He, who is the great Convincer of the World, may imprint thoſe Convictions upon your Souls, which may make you ſit down and bewail your ſelves in the bitterneſs of your Spirit. Now to ſhut up our Diſcourſe at this time, we would only ſay to theſe who are entertaining this holy Warfare againſt their Corruptions, that they ſhould not be much diſcouraged, though they ſee not a compleat victory: You muſt know that ſin muſt be with you while you have a being: we may certainly allude unto that word, *Dan.* 7. 12. And ſay, that the dominion of your ſins ſhall be taken away, though their lives ſhall be prolonged for a time and for a ſeaſon. As likewiſe we would ſay this for your encouragement, who have your Corruptions ſtirring moſt within you, that ordinarily Satan when he is in the way to remove, then ſtirreth and acteth moſt: as it is obſerved, that the laſt beating of the pulſe in a dying man is moſt ſtrong, ſo the beating of Corruption, when it is going to be caſt out may be moſt violent.

And if ye enquire the reaſon, why Chriſtians are not much affected with the day that is coming when they ſhall preuail over their Corruptions, and ſhall tread Satan under their feet: And why the feet of thoſe who bring ſuch glad tydings are not beautiful upon the mountains?

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we conceive that it doth either proceed from this, that Chriſtians are not ſeriouſly engaged in this Holy Warfare: for this is moſt certain, that if you were fighting day by day, then the hope of Victory, and of a bleſſed iſſue would be as glad tydings from a far Countrey, and as cold water unto a thirſty Soul; and though your hopes were deferred until your hearts were ſick, yet the accompliſhment of your deſires would be ſweet to your Souls: or elſe it doth proceed from this, that Chriſtians do not believe this truth, That there is an iſſue and period of their Fight; If once you could be brought this length to ſeal thistruth, that that victory ſhalbe once heard in Heaven, *Speak comfortably to Jeruſalem, for her Warfare is accompliſhed*, if we may allude unto theſe words: Or if a Chriſtian be ſeriouſly debating with his Luſts, and hath alſo the faith of this truth in ſome meaſure, then it doth proceed from want of the diſtinct perſuaſions of his intereſt, and want of the aſſurance of his peace with God; For as long as a Chriſtian is under debate concerning his Eternal Reſt, he cannot be much affected with joy, under the declaration of theſe news, that there is a period of his fight, and that they who have *been made partakers of the firſt Reſurrection, over them the ſecond Death ſhall have no power.* O! What a bleſſed Day ſuppoſe ye ſhall that be, when your Feet ſhall ſtand within the Gates of the new *Jeruſalem*, when you ſhall receive theſe *two* precious Badges, and eternal Trophies of your Victory, *A Crown put upon your Head*, of infinite more value than all material Crowns, and *A Palm put in your Hand!* We conceive, It is impoſſible to determine what joy will accrue to a Chriſtian upon the reflex thoughts of this, That he hath trode Satan under his Feet, and hath bruiſed the Head of him, who hath ſo oft bruiſed his Heel. And as for thoſe who are ſtrangers (as the moſt part of us are) unto this Spiritual Warfare, be convinced of this, that within threeſcore or fewer years, God ſhall enter into an eternal Warfare with you, where there ſhall be no Ceſſation of Arms, neither ſhall there be any interruption. It is better to fight with

your

your Lusts, than to fight with *a living and eternal God*, when he shall declare himself to be your opposite and enemy. Man once was made perfect, but he did find out many Inventions, and amongst all those Inventions he found that accursed one, how to make a Separation betwixt him and the *Living God*; And had not *He*, whose Name is *Prudence*, and hath found out the knowledg of many witty inventions, found out that precious Invention of reconciling Sinners unto God, we had been *Magor Missabib*, Terrors to our selves. O! that you would be perswaded once for all to contend with your Lusts, that ye may endure the Heat of the Day, and the Cold of the Night, in wrestling against Sin: Know this, that *Sin goeth not out but by Fasting and Prayer*: It is so straitly united to us, That it is easier for a Camel to pass thorow the eye of a Needle, than for many of us to mortifie our Corruptions. We shall shut up all that we would say in this one word, Be perswaded of this, that the Day is approaching and near at hand, when our *Blessed Lord Jesus* shall come with ten thousands of his Saints. And what if this were the day (O unmortified Sinners!) that ye should behold that white Throne fixed in the Clouds, and have a Summons given into your hands without continuation of days, to appear before his Tribunal? What could ye answer when ye are reproved? Would not Silence and Confession be your best Defence? Certainly there is an eternal Curse to be pronounced against those who do not exercise themselves unto this precious act of Godliness, *viz. Crucifying the flesh, with the lusts and affections thereof.* There is a law of death over your head, and there is a law of sin which is within your hearts, and ye shall be Subjects eternally unto these two Laws, except *the Law of the Spirit of life do make you free.*

SERMON

SERMON V.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.*

THe walk of a Christian, who hath *Christ* in him *the hope of Glory*, is most sublime; and it being from Spiritual Principles, for Spiritual Ends, is also according to a Spiritual Rule. The walk of a Christian is from *Faith* and *Love in Jesus Christ*, as that predominant Principle; Nay more, from the Spirit of *Christ*, living in the Soul of a Christian by Faith, and dwelling in it by Love, which is that *Primum mobile*, and first wheel of all its Motions; As likewise, it is for a Spiritual end, it being *for the Glory of God*, and (subordinately) to his own Salvation and Advantage: (tho many Christians *Ephraim*-like, are *Empty vines bringing forth fruit unto themselves*) But it is his design to make *Christ all*, and himself *nothing*, though it be natural unto a man to *deifie* himself, and to make himself the first *Alpha* of his Actings, and the last *Omega* of all his Performances: As likewise, it is according to a spiritual Rule, it being conformed unto that precious *Word of Life*, which is perfect in it self, and leadeth man unto Perfection. But this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that we love to take such a liberty to our selves, and such a latitude in our way and walk to Heaven. There is much fear and complaint amongst many, for the loss of their Civil Liberties, and that they are detained Captives in their own Land by the hand of Strangers; But there is a Captivity and Bondage that is less lamented, and yet more intolerable, and that is, the Bondage of *Sin and Iniquity*, that though we should

expire

expire and ſpend *ſeventy* years (which is one of the utmoſt lines of our Life) under this Captivity, yet we ſhould not cry out, *Return our Captivity, as the Rivers of the South.* Are there not many amongſt us, who ly with as much contentment under the Bonds of their Sin, and Fetters of their Iniquity, as if they were Chains of Gold, and Ornaments of fine Gold? Mortification is a myſtery unto our practice: That which was a Paradox to *Saul*, that *A man ſhould find his enemy, and yet let him go well away*, is often committed in theſe days, when we do not ſtudy to crucifie the Luſts and Affections of our Hearts. I think when Chriſtians in theſe days reflect upon thoſe unmortified Corruptions that are within them, they muſt be conſtrained to cry out, that all their hope doth conſiſt in this, *That a living Dog is better than a dead Lion*, and that their confidence is terminate upon this, That as yet they are on this ſide of Eternity. We love Singularity in Opinion, but hate Singularity in Practice, though the one, no doubt, is much more commendable than the other. O may we not wiſh for two Months, wherein we may go unto the Mountains and bewail our virginity, that we have not been eſpouſed unto that precious and excellent One *Jeſus Chriſt*, and that we have not been endeavouring to conform our ſelves unto his bleſſed and precious Image? We confeſs this may be a myſtery to many every day, that they are not eternal Monuments of the juſtice and indignation of *God*, and that ſomewhat of *Cain*'s divinity doth not poſſeſs our hearts, that *Whoſoever findeth us, ſhall kill us.*

At the laſt Occaſion we told you that the *Second* thing that was held forth concerning Mortification, was the extent of it, That a Chriſtian ought to mortifie not only Original Corruption, but alſo his predominant Luſts, and the firſt motions and occaſions unto ſin. Now concerning the Mortification of Original Sin, we have ſpoken ſomewhat, and ſhall inſiſt no further: only we would ſay this, That we laid down this as a Concluſion, That Original Sin could not be mortified in its Body, but only in its Members; And the ground of this aſſertion we conceived

conceived to be this, Becauſe it is impoſſible for a Chriſtian to take up Original Sin in its Body, as is clear, Jer. 17. 9 Where it is ſaid, *that the heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* It is above the reach of any man to fathom and comprehend the deceitfulneſs of his own heart. It is a myſtery that never was unfolded, and as long as we are within time, cannot be unfolded; And, no doubt, a Chriſtian who is convinced of Original Sin, and that the ſpawn and ſeed of every imaginable corruption is within him, will be much in the magnifying of reſtraining Grace, and will ſit down, and pen a Song of Praiſe unto the unſearchable Grace of *Chriſt*, who hath redeemed him; which was *Davids* practice, 1 *Sam.* 25.32,33. We may call Original Sin *Gad*, for after it cometh forth *a Troop*, *Chorus vitiorum*, a Troop of Vices; It is that fruitful womb that doth alwaies bear *Twins*. And we conceive, That Chriſtians, that are ſo called, ought to be much in the ſtudy of Original Sin. It is a wonder that we walk with ſuch woful contentment to Heaven, and to that imagined Happineſs which we ſuppoſe to have: Can ſuch a deluſion as this overtake you, That you can *reap in joy*, who never did *ſow in tears*; and that you can return, bringing *ſheaves in your boſome*, who never went forth bearing *precious Seed?* We think to climb to Heaven by that ſhort ladder of Preſumption: I would ſay this, and do wiſh that you would conſider it, We are afraid that there ſhall be many woful and ſad diſappointments to many of our hopes, and that we ſhall be conſtrained to reject our confidence: For we ſeparate thoſe things which *God* hath conjoyned; we either purſue for Holineſs without Juſtification, or elſe we purſue for Juſtification without Holineſs.

Now in ſpeaking upon the Mortification of predominant Luſts, (which are here called *Affections*, becauſe the ſpirit of a Chriſtian, and of any, are moſt ſtrongly united unto theſe,) we ſhall not inſiſt to prove this unto you, that it is the duty of a Chriſtian, (or of any elſe) to mortifie this predominant Luſts; that being clear

from *Matth.* 18. 8, 9. Where we are commanded *To Pluck out our right eye, if it do offend us.* The meaning of which is this, That if we had a Luſt as dear to us as our right Eye, if it hurt and offend us, we ſhould pluck it out: and from *Mark.* 9. 45,47. and from *Col.* 3. 5. where we are commanded to *Mortifie our inordinate Affections.* Neither ſhall we inſiſt much upon that diſtinction of predominant Luſts, That there are ſome predominant Luſts, which are more pure and refined, which ordinarily paſs under the notion and vail of vertue; as Pride, when it is mixed with Prudence in its actings, paſſeth under the vail of Generoſity, and Highneſs of Spirit; and Prodigality, when it is not ſenſual and brutiſh, paſſeth under the notion of Mortification to the world: And Satan in tempting people to the acting of theſe predominant Luſts, doth not only ſtudy to gain the Affections, but likewiſe ſtudieth to gain our light and judgment unto the acting of theſe things. There are ſome predominant Luſts which are more groſs; the ſinfulneſs of which is more eaſily diſcerned, and Satan in tempting people to the acting of theſe Luſts, ſtudieth mainly to gain the Affection, which in ſo far gaineth the Judgment, as it ſets about to deviſe and meditate upon the way, How ſuch predominate Luſts may be effectuat and accompliſhed. O! But the mind of Man will plot ſubtil iniquity, and the Affection and Heart will execute the plottings of the Mind, with greateſt Carefulneſs and Sedulity.

Now that which firſt we ſhall ſpeak upon the work of Mortification of predominant luſts, ſhall be this; to ſhew what are the diſadvantages that a Chriſtian hath by not ſtudying to mortifie and crucifie his predominant luſts, but giving way and conceſſion to them to live.

The *Firſt* diſadvantage we conceive to be this, That a Chriſtian who is not much in the Mortification of his predominant Luſts, is hindered much of that precious fellowſhip and divine Familiarity which would be betwixt God and him; the giving way to the King of our luſts to live, ſeparates friends; and that word is true,

That

That a borther offended is harder to be won, than the bars of a ſtrong Caſtle. Now this is clear from Ezek. 14.5. where it is ſaid, *That I may take the Houſe of Iſrael in their own heart, becauſe they are all eſtranged from me through their Idols*; As likewiſe verſ. 7,8. of that Chapter, *Every one that ſeparateth himſelf, whether of Iſrael, or of a Stranger, & ſetteth up his Idols in his heart, I will ſet my face againſt him, and cut him off.* Thus Separation from *God*, and woful Idolatry, are two inſeparable companions. As likewiſe, it is clear from *Ezek.* 44. 10. where theſe are conjoyned again; and *Iſaiah* 59. 2. *Your Iniquities have ſeparated betwixt you and me.* And I may ſay this, That a Chriſtian who can, to his apprehenſion, find ſome ſweetneſs and enjoyment of *God*, without the Exerciſe of Mortification, may queſtion much the reality of his enjoyment. For it is certain, that the entertaining predominant Luſts, doth exceedingly interrupt Communion and Fellowſhip with *God*, not only becauſe of this, That predominant Luſts, when they are in exerciſe, do exceedingly weaken a Chriſtian in his diligence, and in his zeal and fervency in going about theſe Duties, by which Communion with *God* is attained: (Some folks predominant Luſts having got ſuch advantage over them, that they will almoſt ceaſe to pray without Convictions; or if they have Convictions, they will ſuddenly evaniſh) But alſo becauſe of this, that when a predominant Luſt is in its vigorous exerciſe, then a Chriſtian loſeth much of the former impreſſion of the ſweetneſs of Communion and Fellowſhip with *Chriſt*. O! But *Chriſt* might live long in Heaven ere we gave him a viſit; we think we can be happy without him, and that is but an imaginary deluſion of our lying Luſts.

There is this *Second* Diſadvantage that a Chriſtian hath by not ſtudying to crucifie his predominant Luſts, *viz.* That ſuch a Chriſtian doth not receive any return of Prayer, and God doth deny him the anſwer of his deſires. This is clear from *Ezek.* 20. 31. where he ſaith, *Do ye pollute your ſelves with your Idols, and come and enquire at me? As I live, ſaith the Lord, I will not be*

enquired of by you. And this was the Divinity of that blinde man, Joh. 9.31. *God heareth not Sinners:* And it was the Divinity of *David*, Psal. 66. *If I regard Iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my Prayer:* and most clearly, *Isai.* 59. 2. where their Iniquities do cause him deny to hear their suits. O! How many Inhibitions are served in Heaven against the Professors of this generation, that they should pray and not be heard, and should cry and yet not have access: And certainly it is no wonder, that such Prayers as we present unto God, while our predominant Lusts are in exercise, be not heard; We pray to God with such indifferency and formality, as in a manner we turn over our Prayers into a Complement to salute God with in the Morning, and to take our farewel of him at Night; we know not much more use of many of our Prayers, and hence it is that he denyeth to us the answer of them. I would only speak this to you, Let Christians Hearts first speak the words which they are to speak in Prayer, and then let their words speak their Heart, that their Heart may endite that which is the matter of their desires

There is this *Third* Disadvantage that a Christian hath by entertaining his predominant Lusts, *viz.* It doth exceedingly interrupt his motion unto Heaven: How far have you gone these many days, or these many years? The motion of Christians is *Retrograde* in these days, they go backward, but do not go on from strength to strength. O! that we might give obedience to that command, Heb. 12 1. *Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*; more Mortification would make greater motion towards Heaven, than we do attain to.

There is this *Fourth* Disadvantage that a Christian hath by entertaining his predominant Lusts; and it is this, That when a predominant Lust is not mortified, then any Corruption that is within you will easily be discovered in the day of Trial; the *Lord* oft-times taketh that revenge upon many, that because they would not mortifie

tifie at home, he will write their Iniquities in legible letters upon their Foreheads, that those that run may read them. This is clear, *Ezek.* 16.36. compared with 37. *verſ.* where their entertaining of their Idols is threatned with this curſe, *That he will diſcover their nakedneſs, and make the ſhame thereof to appear*: And if ye believed this more throughly, That God may be provoked to write your unmortified Luſts in Capital Letters upon your Forehead, it would provoke you to be more in this exerciſe.

There is this *Fifth* Diſadvantage that a Chriſtian hath by it, and it is this; that in the day, when he ſhall be paſſing thorow the valley of the ſhadow of death, and ſhall be looking long and endleſs eternity in the face, then a predominant unmortified Luſt will be ill company, and will raiſe a ſtorm within the conſcience, which will not eaſily be appeaſed: There are not many of us fit for Eternity, neither do we live as though we were dayly to die. If you would walk with peace thorow the firſt and ſecond gates of death, then ſtudy the Mortification of your luſts: O! at the ſinging of that triumphant ſong, *O death where is thy ſting?* &, *O grave where is thy victory?* ſhall not the ſoul be fraught with divine conſolation and unſpeakly joy?

There is this *Laſt* diſdavantage that waits upon the Chriſtian, and it is this, That ſuch an one doth exceedingly marre all the performances which he goeth about, and (as it were) leaveth a print of his hands upon theſe moſt holy and excellent duties. A Chriſtian who hath a predominant Luſt, and is not ſtudying to mortifie it, his gifts pray more than his Grace: as likewiſe, he is more in ſeeking the approbation of Men, than the praiſe of *God*: A Chriſtian that doth not ſtudy to mortifie his Luſts, is more in ſeeking the ornaments of Chriſtianity, than the ſubſtance of it. I think the Vitals and Eſſentials of Chriſtianity are much exhauſted and ſpent; and there are ſome few bones left, rather the picture and Anatomy of a Chriſtian, than really one: As likewiſe, one who doth not ſtudy to mortifie his predominant Luſts,

will not make conſcience of obeying the Commandment of Faith: And this likewiſe waits on him, much hardneſs and impenitency of heart. O! how often through the deceitfulneſs of ſin doth our heart become as a ſtone within us, and we are delivered into the hands of our iniquities.

Now that which *Secondly*, we ſhall ſpeak to concerning the Mortification of predominant luſts, ſhall be to ſhew what is that profound ſubtilty and deſperat deceitfulneſs Satan uſeth in tempting people to the acting of their predominant luſts: we have near ſix thouſand years experience, that he is a lyar and a murtherer, though we believe the flatteries of ſin, as though our iniquities were from one of good report and of known integrity that never did deceive. Now we conceive that Satans ſubtilty doth appear in theſe; (1.) In this, That ordinarily when a Chriſtian, or any Soul, is in a moſt ſecure and preſumptuous frame, then Satan tempts him to the acting of his predominant Luſt; when *Chriſt* is away, then he doth aſſail: this is moſt clearly pointed at, *Luke* 22. 31. compared with 33 *verſ.* where *Chriſt* ſaith to *Peter*, *Satan hath deſired to ſift you as wheat*; And if ye will read the 33. *verſ.* ye will behold *Peter*'s frame, that he was on a high ſtring of preſumption, *Though all men ſhould forſake thee, yet I will not do it*: As likewiſe it is clear from 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. where when *David* was lying upon his Bed, and walking upon the roof of his Houſe, then is he tempted to the acting of the Sin of Uncleanneſs: Satan ſtudieth to catch his advantage, eſpecially at that time, when we are moſt prone to embrace, and moſt unapt to reſiſt; therefore it ſhould be a Chriſtians endeavour to exerciſe Watchfulneſs, and to ſtand upon his Watch-Tower. 2. Satans ſubtilty doth appear in this, that ordinarily he doth propoſe an imaginary advantage in imbracing ſuch a luſt, and doth fire our affections with the pleaſure of it, but doth not make mention of the diſadvantage and infinite hurt that doth come from that Luſt. This was clear in his firſt tempting of our firſt Parents,

Parents, he made mention of this; *If you eat of the forbidden fruit, you ſhall be as God:* but no mention made of this, that they ſhould become *Sinners*, and it's moſt clear in *Matth.*4.8. where Satan ſheweth unto that Holy and Spotleſs One, *all the Kingdoms of the world, with the glory of them*, and theſe things he promiſed to give *Chriſt*; he ſhewed him the glory of the Kingdoms of the World, but did not ſhew him the vexation and toil of theſe Kingdoms: And no doubt, the one is much more than the other. The hook wherewith he ſtudieth to take us, is varniſhed over with the bait of imaginary Dignity, with tranſient Pleaſures, and with paſſing Vanities. O! that we were wiſe as Serpents, to know the depths of Satan, that we might not be enſnared, nor taken by entiſements. (3.) It appeareth in this, That ordinarily he ſtudieth either to extenuat the ſinfulneſs of Sin, that a Chriſtian may be brought to call this but a *Zoar*; or elſe he ſtudieth to prove the conſiſtency betwixt ſuch a Sin, and the reality of the Grace of God: And when once a Chriſtian is brought to ſuch a length, as to ſuppoſe the reality of the Grace of Gods conſiſtency, with the acting of ſuch a Luſt, then he is near a fall; for then he crieth out, *Maſter, pardon me when I ſhall bow my knee in the houſe of Rimmon, and when my Maſter leaneth upon my hand:* he then takes an indulgence and a latitude to himſelf to commit that iniquity. (4.) Sathans ſubtilty doth appear in this, That oft-times he will reſtrain the Temptation to the acting of your predominant Luſts, and withdraw the objects of them, that either you may be put off your watch, or, which is more ordinary, that Luſts may take life, when the object of Luſt is withdrawn. And this is moſt certain, that Luſt oft-times groweth moſt, where there are feweſt Temptations to aſſail it; for upon the abſence of our Idols, our love to theſe things doth increaſe; 2 *Sam.* 13. 2, 4. Where a luſting *Ammon* will wax lean every day, when he wants the object whereupon to feed (5.) Satans ſubtilty doth eminently appear in this, That or-

dinarily he will tempt people to the acting of these sins, that are introductive to, and bring on the acting of their predominant Lusts: he will tempt one that is given to Uncleanness, to Pride, Idleness, fulness of Bread: And certainly one who is given to the evil of Pride, he will tempt him to the smaller actings of these sins, that so he may ascend by degrees; he will study to sceise upon the out-forts of the Soul, that so he may gain the affections: he will break the Covenant that we have made with our eyes, that so we may break the covenant that we have made with heart. (6.) *Lastly*, Satans subtilty doth appear in this, That ordinarily he will tempt people to the acting of their predominant Lust under the vail of Vertue, and things commendable; as, he will tempt one to Covetousness upon this account, that he may be capacitated to be charitable to the Poor, and may be useful to these who want in their generation: he will tempt one to sin, (as is clear, *Rom.* 3.6.) that the Grace of *Christ* may be more conspicuous in pardoning: he tempted *Christ* to presumption under the vail of Faith, as is clear, Matth. 4.6. *If thou be the Son of God, cast thy self down*; And the ground he giveth is, *For it is written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee*, &c. And likewise he tempts many to the acting of Misbelief, under the vail of Humility, Knowledg, and distinct apprehensions of God.

That which *Thirdly* we shall speak to shall be, to give you some evidences whether or not ye have attained unto the Mortification of your predominant lusts, and whether indeed you have sung a song of triumph over them; and having spoken somewhat to this before, we shall not insist much upon it now, only we would say these three things, 1. That a Christian that can reflect upon lusts which he supposeth to be mortified with delight, and want of the exercise of grief, may suspect the reality of his Mortification. O! How may one that can meditate upon his predominant Lust, which he supposed was mortified, and yet not be constrained to cover himself with Ashes, nor put Sack-cloth upon his loins, cry forth *Miserere mei, Have pity upon me.* 2. This is an Evidence that your predominant Lust is not mortified, when

when you are not ſedulous and careful to eſchew all things that lead unto the acting of your predominant Sin: If ye be not giving obedience unto that Command, 1 Theſſ. 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearance of evil*, you may queſtion the reality of your Mortification. It were an excellent practice of a Chriſtian, to be as much under the impreſſion of the Sinfulneſs of a predominant Luſt and Sin, after it is mortified, and to be as much in purſuing it, as when it is in its vigorous exerciſe and life with you. And (3.) this likewiſe may evidence it, when one can upon ſuitable and convenient occaſions of acting ſuch a predominate Sin, have his luſt ſet on fire, and endeavour to act it, ſuch may queſtion the reality of his Mortification. I know the great Bond which reſtraineth many from the acting of their predominant luſt, is not the apprehenſion of the *Holineſs of God*, but the want of Secrecy: O! But if we had Secrecy, we would not mourn much for theſe Sins which we commit in ſecret; neither would we be much in deſiſting from the acting of theſe things, unto which our Luſt doth lead us. It was certainly a commendable practice of one, who being tempted unto the Sin of Uncleanneſs, did condiſcend to ſatisfie the deſire of one that did purſue her, upon this condition, that he would bring her unto a place where none ſhould behold her; which he attempting to do, and bringing her to the moſt retired imaginable place: She then moſt piouſly uttered forth theſe words, *Doth not God behold us?* Which words had ſuch an influence upon him, that he deſiſted from further proſecuting ſuch woful and carnal deſigns. O! But the apprehenſion of the Omniſcience of God, would keep us much to the crucifying of our moſt predominat Luſt.

Now to ſhut up our Diſcourſe at this time, We ſhall only ſpeak a little unto thoſe, who are guilty of that predominant Luſt of *Covetouſneſs*, which we conceive, is not only a predominant, but alſo an univerſal Luſt; *Sin* is an univerſal *King* over the moſt abſolute Monarch, and over every one that ſits upon the dunghil. And we conceive that *Covetouſneſs* is one of *Sins* greateſt *Princes-*

cts, acting under this absolute Monarch, and hath most Subjects. And we would only propose these things by which you may be helped to mortifie such a Lust and Idol. O! Meditate much upon the disadvatages attending this Idol of Covetousness; we conceive the disadvantages thereof are clearly pointed forth, 1 *Tim.*6.9, 10. where the Apostle *Paul* enumerateth *four* Disadvantages of that Sin of Covetousness. 1. That it is that which maketh *People erre from the Faith.* 2. *It drowneth them in destruction and perdition.* 3. *It is the root of all evil.* And lastly, *It pierceth them through with many sorrows.* As for those, *whose god is the world*, We would only propose this Consideration to them, which we conceive hath most influence upon such; Be persuaded of this, that *Covetousness* will abbreviat and shorten your Life, as is clear, *Jam.* 5.3. where this is one property of this *idol of Covetousness, that it shall eat up your flesh, as it were fire.* It is not an insensible cutting short of your life, but most sensibly will abbreviat it and bring you, in the midst of your days, to your long and everlasting home. And there is this disadvantage of it also, That *Covetousness* is that Sin, which doth most directly commit a breach of the First Command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*, as is clear, *Col.* 3.5. where this Sin of Covetousness is called Idolatry, —*and Covetousness which is Idolatry.* And certainly, What are those things which you pursue after, but white and yellow dust and glittering clay? The excellency of which we conceive, doth consist as much (by the estimation of men) in the rarity of them, as in any intrinsical and internal worth and excellency of them. And how contemptible are Riches and the World? doth not this speak it, that when there is abundance of these things, they become contemptible? as is clear from that word, That *Solomon made Silver as stones in the streets of Jerusalem*; which doth not only speak out the abundance of these things in his days, but likewise it speaketh forth this, That abundance of these things maketh them contemptible, and moveth us to undervalue them. And that which *Solomon* hath,

hath, Prov. 23. 5. *Why ſetteſt thou thy heart on that which is not? for Riches take to themſelves wings, and flee away:* e're long the world ſhall either leave you, or you ſhall leave the world.

Now we ſhall deſire to conclude our Diſcourſe with this, That ye would ſeriouſly intend the Mortification of your Luſts, and that you would be much in the employment of the Spirit of *Chriſt*: *Chriſt* hath killed the damning power of Sin, and hath promiſed to us the Spirit of Mortification, by which we may kill the Dominion of Sin: And certainly, a Chriſtian ought to act ſo in dependance on the Spirit of *Chriſt*, as if he were a meer Patient and Inſtrument under his hand: But withal, we conceive, that in reſpect of activity and endeavours, a Chriſtian ought to act ſo, as if he acted independently from Him, and did act all himſelf; but withal in reſpect of ſelf-denial, he ought ſo to act, as it he acted nothing at all, but the Spirit acted alone in him; and therefore ſhould cry out, after he hath done all, That *he is but an unprofitable Servant*: O! That ye would be perſuaded ſeriouſly to ponder and ballance theſe things, that except ye be the ruin of your Iniquities, Iniquity ſhall certainly be your ruine; and ye know not how long it is unto that day, when that Decree ſhall be paſt in Heaven againſt you, *They are joined to their Idols, let them alone.* I ſhall only ſay that word which *John* hath in his 1 Epiſtle 5. Chap. *laſt* ver. *Little Children, keep your ſelves from Idols.*

SERMON

SERMON VI.

Gal. 5.24. *And they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.*

IT is an unchangeable and unalterable Decree of Heaven, which cannot be repealed, *That the wages of Sin is Death*; and, *That whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*: Yet, we conceive, there be many that are possessed with this Delusion, *That though they do adde drunkennesse to thirst*, and do daily taste of that forbidden fruit, yet at last *They shall obtain a place to walk in, amongst those that stand by*: They conceive, that there is a possible union of pure Religion and undefiled, with the want of Mortification; And yet we think, that Religion without Mortification, is nothing else but the mortification of Religion, and *the crucifying of Christ afresh*. Are there not many here, who instead of *travelling in birth, until Christ be formed in them*, are travelling in birth, till they bring forth iniquity, and till the Image of that old Man be fully framed in them. Now there is this that we would have you know, and wish that it were engraven upon the fleshly Tables of your Heart, as with a Pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond, That there is a twofold Tribunal, upon which *God* doth sit to judg; There is a Tribunal of Justice, where all the Sentences past, are of pure unmixed Wrath, without all Temperament or mixture of Mercy: And before this Tribunal all flesh must once appear, and receive that dreadful Sentence of eternal Separation from the Majesty of the Lord; and, if you do well, you must say *Amen* unto the equi y of that Sentence: But know this for your consolation, that this is not his last word; Know that that Justice-Court is but subordinate, and there is another higher, unto which we may appeal, to have that Sentence of Justice sweetly repealed.

pealed. And is not this one myſterious depth of infinit Love, that *Grace* ſhould declare them righteous, whom Juſtice hath condemned, and yet leave no imputation upon the Juſtice of God? That *Love* ſhould ſweetly reduce Decrees of Juſtice, and declare them in Law to be void and null? This is the Law of Love. And is not this a myſtery of infinit Love, that ſeeing it is an abomination for man *to juſtifie the wicked*, it ſhould be Love and Juſtice in God, *to juſtifie the ungodly?* And is not this a wonder, that though *there be no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*, yet there ſhould be many things condemnable in them, and that Divine Love ſhould make ſuch an abſtraction, as to make a ſeparation betwixt many things that are condemnable, and Condemnation? *Juſtice and Judgment are the habitation of his Throne*, yet *Mercy and Truth go before it*, and cometh neareſt Sinners, to make ready their way, that they may ſpeak with Juſtice. There is this that we would have you know, That in the accompliſhment of this work of Mortification, a Chriſtian hath that ſame power communicable unto him for the overcoming of his temptations, which *Chriſt* had in the overcoming of Principalities and Powers; as is clear, *Epheſ.* 1. 19, 20. And certainly, ſomtimes when a Chriſtian doth reflect upon thoſe living and ſtrong Corruptions that are within him, he will have much of that fear which *Eliſha*'s ſervant had, who cryed out, *Maſter, what ſhall we do?* But if our eyes were opened, we ſhould ſee, That there are many more for us, than againſt us. O put on much of that Divine Generoſity of *Nehemiah*, (if we may allude unto it in this Combate of Faith) *Should ſuch an one as I flee?* However, keep amidſt betwixt diſcouragement, and anxious Unbelief: And I would only give Chriſtians, who are indeed engaged in this Holy Warfare, that counſel which *Ahab* gave to *Benhadad*, 1 King. 20. 11. *Let not him that putteth on his armour boaſt, as he that putteth it off*: Let confident Faith be mixed with holy Fear, that there may be a ſweet mixture of theſe two. And there is this alſo which we would ſpeak to you, That there is a difference betwixt

betwixt the grant or gift of Pardon, and the intimation of it unto a Christian: Yea more, there is a difference betwixt the intimation of Pardon, (even for a sin mortified and repented of) and the Divine Application of it: this is clear by comparing *2 Sam.* 12. 13. with *Psal.* 51. where *Nathan* saith to *David*, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.* Where is both the grant of pardon and the intimation of it, and yet he himself, *Psal.* 51. prayeth for the application of Pardon; Pardon was not applied, though it was intimated: And it saith this to us, That we would not alwaies conclude from the want of the sensible convictions of pardon, that Pardon is not granted to us.

But now to come to that at which we left at the last occasion, *viz.* The extent of Mortification, that a Christian ought not only to Mortifie Original sin, but his predominant lusts also, with all the motions and occasions unto the acting of these sins. Concerning the Mortification of original sin, which is here called the *Flesh*, we have spoken already, and have also spoken somewhat concerning the Mortification of predominant lusts and presumptious sins; (though turned now to be an improper expression, to make mention of predominant grace that should stand in opposition to predominant lusts) I would say this, that under the Law, there is no express mention made of any Sacrifice for presumptious sins, unto which the *Apostle* doth allude, Heb. 10. 26. *If a man sin wilfully after he hath received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for sin.* And certainly this may make us astonished to entertain our predominant sins, and our presumtious iniquities, to entertain them so, as not to debate and wrestle with them, for they turn not unto presumptious sins, except we go such a length: therefore we should be much in presenting that supplication, Psal. 19. 13. *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, and let them not have dominion over me.*

Now that which we shall speak to *First*, shall be to shew what are the most effectual & Spiritual means, by which a Christian

Chriſtian may be helped to the mortifying of his predominant luſts: but by the way we ſhall only ſay this, that this generation deſireth rather to know what to do, then to do and practiſe what they know: We think to get to Heaven by knowledge, though we confeſs, we will not get there without it, yet there is much more requiſite for a Chriſtian, then only to know.

1. The *Firſt* way, how a Chriſtian may be helped to mortifie his predominant Luſts, is this, To be much in the exerciſe of Secret Prayer. And I muſt ſay this, He is a bleſſed Chriſtian who ever won to the Mortification of the leaſt ſtrength of a Luſt, by praying publickly, whether more publick, or in Families, or with Society: Pride and Self-ſeeking is that Caterpillar and Worm that eats up the fruit of theſe Addreſſes unto *God*; But if you were much in ſecret Prayer alone, it would be a compendious way to attain to the Mottification of your Luſts, that when a Meſſenger of Satan buffets you, you may go to the Throne *thrice*, and beſeech the *Lord*, that this evil may depart from you; as is clear, not only, *Epheſ. 6.* 18. where amongſt all the reſt of the Spiritual Armour of a Chriſtian, Prayer is made mention of, *Pray with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*: and it is clear, Jam. 5. 17. *If any man be afflicted, let him pray.* And 2 Cor. 12. 7,8. *For this I beſought the Lord thrice.* O! Whither are theſe *waſhings of our bed with Tears*, and the preſentings of Supplications *with Sighs and Groans that cannot be expreſſed*, now gone? There be few Chriſtians, but can make language of their Grief, their grief of heart goes never ſo deep, as to make them cry out, *I am ſo troubled, that I cannot ſpeak.* He were indeed a Phenix of his time, who could, without lying to the Holy Ghoſt, ſay, That *his bones were waxing old through his roaring all the day long*; and we would only ſay to ſuch, as are not endeavouring after this, You ſhall go down to your Graves, having your bones full of the Sins of your Youth.

2. There is this *Second* mean that we would ſpeak to, *viz.* That a Chriſtian would be much in the Exerciſe of the

the Grace of Watchfulneſs; This is clear from *Luke* 21. 31. and from Matth. 26. 41. *Watch and Pray, leſt ye enter into temptation.* And certainly, Watchfulneſs is a moſt requiſit piece of Armour, that *after we have done all we may ſtand:* Not only, (1.) Becauſe Watchfulneſs is that which diſcovereth unto a Chriſtian his weakneſs and inability; For it is a Chriſtians ſtrength to be convinced of this, as is clear, 2 Cor. 12. 10. *When I am weak, then am I ſtrong:* This is a Paradox to Nature, but no Myſtery to Grace; But alſo, becauſe Watchfulneſs is a moſt effectual mean to diſcover to a Chriſtian the ſubtilty and profound deceitfulneſs of his adverſaries, which maketh him to be much in watching over his own heart. 2. Watchfulneſs likewiſe is that Grace, which diſcovereth unto a Chriſtian, the formal and remiſs actings of Grace in this precious Combat: When Faith begins to die, and Hope begins to languiſh, and Love and Zeal begin to wax cold, then watchfulneſs giveth warning to prayer, that it may go ſeek ſtrength for thoſe that were languiſhing: (3.) As likewiſe watchfulneſs is requiſit, becauſe it diſcovereth unto a Chriſtian, the firſt motions of his adverſaries, when firſt they begin to ſtir, which, no doubt, is a great Advantage. (4.) Watchfulneſs diſcovereth unto a Chriſtian, the Advantage which he hath over his Luſts, which doth exceedingly encourage him to go on in this Spiritual Warfare.

3. There is this *Thirdly* which is requiſit, *viz.* that a Chriſtian be much in meditation upon the ſufferings, death, and love of *Jeſus Chriſt.* I know not (to a tender Chriſtian) a more effectual means to mortifie his Affections and Luſts, than this: now it is clear that it is ſo, not only from 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. where *Paul* ſaith, *The love of Chriſt did conſtrain him, becauſe he thus judged that if one died for all, then were all dead, that we ſhould henceforth no more live to our ſelves.* And *Peter* preſſeth this, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. compared with ver. 20. *Be ye holy as he is holy:* and he ſubjoyneth the reaſon of it, *for ye are bought with a price, even with the incorruptible blood of Jeſus Chriſt*: and, 1 *Pet* 4. 1, 2. he preſ-

ſeth

ſeth the Doctrine of Mortification from this; That *Chriſt* was crucified in the fleſh: and it is clear from *Pſal.* 26. 3. where the great Argument which perſuaded *David* to purſue after Sincerity, was this, *For the love of God is alwaies before my eyes.* And is not this a ſweet portraicture, alwaies to contemplat and behold, to look upon that Love, *until ye be changed into that ſame Image, from Glory to Glory?* And certainly, *Chriſt*'s Death and Love muſt have a moſt effectual influence upon this: Can one read theſe words, *He ſweat drops of Blood*; and that word, *If it be poſſible, let this cup depart frrm me*; Can you read theſe words, and not be provoked to hate ſin with a perfect hatred? Can ye love that which crucified *Chriſt*, and brought him ſo low? If ſuch a ſuppoſition had been poſſible, That all that were Sinners had been ſtanding round about the Croſs, in the day that *Chriſt* was hanged up betwixt heaven and earth, in the day that his precious Body was dropping down drops of Blood, might they not have ſaid, O! what a thing muſt that be, which we call Sin, that hath brought him ſo low? And may not the reflex thoughts upon the love of *Chriſt*, provoke you to this, That if *Chriſt* hath ſo far condeſcended unto you, ought ye not to pleaſe him, and to give obedience to his Commandments? O who would diſpute the Commands of ſuch an One? And it is certain, That if we would meditate on theſe things till we wondered, and wonder till we loved, no doubt, it ſhould perſuade us to be endeavouring the Mortification of our Luſts. *Chriſt*'s Death hath not only a Moral influence (of which we have ſpoken) bua it alſo a Phyſical influence alſo upon the Mortification of Sin: For *we are bought* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Peter*, 1 Pet. 1. 20.) *with a price from our vain converſation: Chriſt* hath crucified the damning power of Sin, and hath purchaſed this gift, the Spirit of Sanctification, to crucifie the dominion of Sin.

Fourthly, This is requiſite, That a Chriſtian under debates with Luſts, be much in the exerciſe of the Grace of Faith: It is a moſt inſenſible and unknown help to our

apprehenſion: We think Faith is only a help, when all things are deſperate. And therefore we judge Prayer a more ſuitable help to ſenſe and apprehenſion; therefore a Chriſtian under the prevailing of his Corruptions, will be more in the employment of the Grace of Prayer, than in the employment of the Grace of Faith, though we may ſay this to the advantage of the grace of Faith, that it hath a moſt effectual and moſt divine influence for the crucifying of Luſts: If ſo we may ſpeak, Faith is that which cometh neareſt *Himſelf*; For Faith, (as it is ſpoken of it) hath a kind of Omnipotency with it, *All things are poſſible for thoſe that believe.* Now this is clear, not only from 1 Joh. 5. 5. *This is our Victory, whereby we overcome the world, even our Faith:* But it is clear alſo, Eph. 6. 16. *Above all things take ye the ſhield of Faith, by which you may quench the fiery darts of the Devil.* And certainly, had we ſo much Faith, *as a grain of Muſtard ſeed*, we might ſay to every mountain that is in our way, *Be removed, and hurled into the midſt of the Sea, and it ſhould obey us.* We ſhall clear the influence of Faith in the mortifying of Corruption, not only from this, That the Grace of Faith diſcovereth unto a Chriſtian, that ſuper-eminent and precious excellency of Jeſus Chriſt, at the appearance of which, the glory and luſtre of our Idols do diſappear. We think our Idols are like Stars, that in the night do appear and ſeem beautiful Creatures; But when once that *Sun*, even *The Sun of Righteouſneſs* doth ariſe, then their glory is not ſeen, neither can they be beheld. O! Saw you never ſuch a ſight of him, as conſtrained you to cry forth, *What have I to do any more with Idols?* If ſuch a Suppoſition were poſſible, That any Idol could get entrance above, it would get no entertainment there: for they are upheld by an infinit ſtrength, that cannot fail. 2. Likewiſe the influence of Faith may be cleared in this, That it is that Grace, that doth lay hold upon the Promiſes, by which, and thorow which, ſtrength from *the head* is conveyed unto the Combatant: As for example, when a Believer is wreſtling with his Luſts, Faith layeth hold upon the Promiſe of help, and by it, layeth hold on

Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Promiſer. 3. The influence of Faith may be cleared in this, Faith is that Grace, which diſcovereth to a Chriſtian, *That crown and recompence of reward*, one ſight and view of which, maketh Love and Zeal take fire, making them *to tread upon the high places of the earth*, that when the Archers ſhoot at them, and do grievouſly wound them, yet their bow doth abide in its ſtrength.

Fifthly, There is this mean by which a Chriſtian would mortifie his predominant Luſts, and it is this, he would be much in entertaining the grace of tenderneſs; *Joſeph*-like to cry forth, when temptation doth aſſail him, *Shall I do this, and ſin againſt God?* I am perſwaded that ſin not reſiſted in its motions, doth procure hardneſs; And likewiſe we may ſay, that ſin reſiſted in its beginnings, doth bring forth the Grace of Tenderneſs in a moſt Effectual and Eminent way.

Sixthly, This likewiſe is requiſit, *viz.* That a Chriſtian be much in the apprehenſion of death, Judgment, and Eternity: Theſe three much meditated upon, would make us afraid to ſin. I think a Chriſtian never walketh as he ought, till he walk ſo, as if each moment next to that wherein he liveth, he had the expectation of appearing before the Judgment-Seat of *Chriſt*. O! But it would be a ſad diſpenſation to many, to receive a Summons this day, without continuation of days, to appear before that dreadful and terrible Tribunal of *Jeſus Chriſt*, where the Books ſhall be opened, wherein your wanderings are written, and the Books of your Conſciences ſhall ſhall be opened, and ſhall ſay *Amen*, to every thing that is recorded within the volume of theſe Books: This is clear from *Act.* 17. 30, 31. *He hath commanded all men every where to repent*, and the Argument enforcing it is, becauſe *He hath appointed a Day, in which He will judg the world by this man Jeſus Chriſt*: as likewiſe it is clear in *Eccleſ.* 11. 9. where *Solomon* preſſeth by way of holy *Ironie* (for ſo the ſcope is) Young men not to take their pleaſures in the morning of their time, becauſe for all theſe things *God would bring them to Judgment*. And

we wish that that *Memento*, which did alwaies walk with a holy man, might walk with you, and sound in your ears, *Awake, and come to Judgment*, that it might regulate your walk. I shall not say much, but beware to entertain your Lusts, lest Judgment overtake you, the stones of the wall of this house shall bear witness against you in the day of the *Lord*, that ye have been invited to flee from the wrath to come, and have refused the precious offers of a crucified Saviour. We would obtest and beseech you, that, if there be a Heaven, if there be a *God*, if there be an Eternity, which are most certain and infallible; if there be a Hell, and everlasting separation from the presence of the *Lord*, and if you have precious and immortal souls, that you would tender your own Salvation, and use much of *Peters* divinity, *pity your selves*, for you are destroying your selves through the want of Knowledge; and (if we say it) hell is enlarging it self wide for the receiving of many of the Inhabitants of this place, and of many that live in this generation, who are destitute and void of the Grace of the living *God*.

Now that which *Secondly* we shall speak to, shall be to shew what are the Evidences and Tokens of a Lusts having dominion over one: And we shall shortly point out the Evidences of this Dominion. 1. We conceive this may evidence it, when one can commit sin with delight, and with greedines, when it is pleasure to him to go after the heart of his detestable things, then Sin hath dominion over him: as it is clear, sin hath Dominion over those made mention of 2 Pet. 2. 13 *They account it pleasure to riot in the day time*, and are sporting themselves with their own deceivings; such fools, as *Solomon* speaketh of, *making a mock of sin*: and likewise it is clear of those that are made mention of, Eph. 4. 19. *They commit iniquity with greediness*, and as the Prophet speaketh in another place, *their hearts are mad upon their Idols.*

There is this *Secondly* which may evidence it, and it is this, when one sinneth with his predominant Lusts without Conviction, or if he be convinced, these Convictions

victions do ſuddenly evaniſh like thoſe made mention of, *Jer.* 6.15. *Were they aſhamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all aſhamed, neither could they bluſh:* They had won to ſuch a length in impiety, that not only they would not, but they could not bluſh: And that ſame is made mention of, *Jer.* 8. 12. It is clear likewiſe, Jer. 3. 3. *Thou hadſt a whores forehead, thou refuſedſt to be aſhamed*; and from *Prov.* 30. 20. Where the adulterous woman ſaith, *That ſhe hath done no wickedneſs.* When you are brought unto ſuch a length of impiety, then know that you have yielded your ſelves Servants unto Unrighteouſneſs for a time. 2. There is this which may likewiſe evidence this Dominion of Luſt, and it is this, When this, When one can commit iniquity upon ſmall temptations, yea, upon none at all: This did prove that the Sin of Adultery had ſome dominion over *David*, when he did commit it upon ſo ſmall or no temptation, for this is brought in to aggravate it, 2 Sam. 12. 8. *I gave thee thy Maſters wives into thy boſome:* And it is moſt *emphatically* aggravated, *verſ.* 2,7. That one poor man, having had but only one Ew-lamb, and that *David* having had ſo many, would needs take that only one from the poor man. And 'tis moſt clear, Iſa. 5.18. *Wo unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with a cart-rope:* The meaning of theſe words we conceive to be this, That they did moſt violently, without any great allurement or enticement purſue after the heart of their deteſtable things: they drew with cords of vanity; Certainly, thoſe may greatly ſuſpect themſelves, who upon the firſt preſentation of an Idol, preſently bow down their heads and worſhip it. (3.) This may alſo evidence it, *viz.* When one, notwithſtanding his convictions of the Omniſciency of *God*, beholding of him, will dare to commit ſuch an Iniquity: no doubt, then Sin is brought unto a moſt damnable and moſt atrocious height: Then it was that ſin had dominion over *Er*, Gen. 38. 7. *He did evil in the ſight of the Lord*: The meaning of which word we conceive to be this, That he

did the Evil notwithſtanding he was convinced of the Omniſcience and All-ſeeing eye of *God:* And it is recorded of *Ahab*, 1 King. 21. 20. *He ſold himſelf to commit iniquity in the ſight of the Lord*, notwithſtanding he knew him who hath *ſeven* eyes, that run to and fro thorow the earth, to be looking on. And there is this *Laſtly*, that doth evidence this Dominion, When one doth ſin wth much deliberation and advice, they are not overhailed by their temptations and luſts, but they ſit down in counſel to conſult how ſuch a thing may be effectuated: then had iniquity dominion over thoſe that are made mention of, *Mic.* 2. 1. *Wo to them that deviſe iniquity upon their beds*, that ſit down deliberatly in the the ſilent ſeaſons of the night, to contrive the miſchievous plots of their hearts: And we would only ſay to ſuch, read the 3. or 4. *verſ.* of that Chapter, where *God* ſaith in a ſweet and juſt oppoſition, in regard of their deviſing of iniquity; *Behold* (ſaith he) *I will deviſe againſt this people:* God will deliberatly and with much indignation, puniſh thoſe that ſin deliberatly, it is clear alſo, *Jer.* 18. 12.

Now before we ſhut up our Diſcourſe at this time, we would only ſpeak a little unto this, why *God* doth ſometimes think fit to expoſe his own unto ſome dominion of their luſts? (for it was a notable & moſt true Saying of a Heathen, *As many Vices, as many Maſters*, for every Luſt is a Maſter; and we may ſay, every Luſt hath a ſervant, and ſome have *Ten Thouſand* waiting on.) And 1. when a Chriſtian beginneth to eſtabliſh his own righteouſneſs, then he is in hazard to be given up for a time unto the dominion of his Sin: this is clear, *Ezek.* 33. 13. *If he truſt to his own righteouſneſs, and commit iniquity:* And 2. there may be this reaſon of it, That they may know to diſtinguiſh, betwixt the yoke of *Chriſt*, and the yoke and bondage of Sin, as it is pointed at, *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. And 3. we conceive this may be a reaſon of it, becauſe *God* intendeth to magnifie the glory of his unſearchable Grace, by delivering them from the dore of the pit, when this Song ſhall be ſung, *This my Son was dead, and*

and is alive; and was loſt, and is found: This is the Song of reſtoring Grace, after it hath once prevented the Chriſtian with mercy.

Now we deſire you ſeriouſly to intend this precious work of Mortification: The moſt part of us are Idol-Chriſtians, we have hands, and do nothing; we have eyes, and we ſee not; and we have feet, and we walk not. And certainly, that Practice and Maxime of *Machiavel* is much practiſed among us, he thought it was advantageous to have the profeſſion of Religion, and of vertue: But he thought it dangerous to have the reality of Religion: there are many that deſire to be clothed with the coat of *Chriſt*, that never deſired conformity with *Chriſt* in their inward man: And we think, if *Chriſt* were to come down from heaven, He might preach this to many of us, *Betrayeſt thou the Son of Man with a kiſs?* There are many I am ſure, that have a lower ſpirit than *Judas*, that would ſell *Chriſt* at a lower rate than *thirty* pieces of Silver: O! Eternity, eternity, *What ſhall you do in the day of deſolation, when your viſitation ſhall come from a far? Where ſhall you flee for help? And where ſhall you leave your glory?* I ſhall ſhut up all that I have to ſay with this, the wrath of that living (but contemned) ſtone that was cut out of the Mountain without hands, ſhall be more intolerable than the weight of mountains and hills. Therefore the Reprobates rather chuſe to be under weight of Hills and Mountains, than to be under the weight of this living Corner-ſtone, that is now ſo much deſpiſed. O! Will you not embrace him? May not Angels laugh at your folly, and have you in holy deriſion? The triumpher is above, and it is not long before his own ſhall cry forth, *It is finiſhed.* And no doubt if we were much in the exerciſe of Faith, we ſhould eaſily accompliſh this Warfare: We may call Faith *Eliezer*, of whom it is reported, That he did ſo purſue his enemies, that the people returned to gather up the ſpoils. Love, Prayer, and Joy will eternally ſit down, and reap the ſweet fruits of the victory of Faith. Now to him that can make you overcome, thorow the blood of the Lamb, and the word of your teſtimony, we deſire to give praiſe.

SERMON VII.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christ's, have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.*

IT was a Divine Sentence of that Master of Experiences, That *Love covereth a multitude of sins*: we may well say, That that precious and infinite Love, which *Christ* hath had to Sinners, *hath covered a multitude of Sins*: Though this is a Lamentation, and shall be for a Lamentation, That the most part of us have not come that length in Religion, which the Publicans and Sinners did attain to, which was, *To love those that loved them.* Doth not *Christ*'s engraving of his Love to Sinners, in Letters of Blood, call for this at our hand, that we should devote our selves wholly to him? But we confess, such is that desperate enmity and deceitfulness of the hearts of all Flesh, That if all who have been partakers of the divine Nature, or shall be partakers of it, had but one heart to conduct them to Heaven, it would misguide them in the way, That being the matchless and incommunicable Prerogative of the *Captain of our Salvation*, to guide many Sons and Daughters to Glory. I think, if there were a description to be given of the most part of us, it behoved to be that which is in Prov. 6.13. *He speaketh with his feet, and teacheth with his fingers*: And the great Lesson that we would teach with our feet, and preach with our hands would be, *Iniquity, Formality, and distance from God.* And I would have you, who are expectants of Heaven, and have some small hope of being eternally with him, to be much in this precious work of Mortification. There are some so habituat to sin, that (if *God* do not prevent them) the last act they shall

ſhall commit on this ſtage of the world, ſhall be an act of iniquity, and they ſhall breath out their laſt, in departing from that *inviſible Majeſty.* There are ſome that though they live ſeventy years, they ſhall not have this to ſay, of one day of all their life, that they have devoted and given it to *God.* Mortification is a myſtery to our knowledg, but much more a myſtery to our practice: It is a wonder that many of us are not diſtracted, and that much of *Cain's* Divinity doth not poſſeſs us, that *whoſoever findeth us by the way, ſhall kill us.* However, unto thoſe who make any Conſcience of this Duty, we would ſay theſe two things; 1. Ye may yield unto the Premiſſes and Aſſertions of Unbelief, which it draweth from the dominion of your ſin over you, but ſtill deny its concluſions: This was the practice of *David, Pſal.* 65. 3. There the aſſertion of Unbelief is in the firſt words, *Iniquities prevail over me,* yet he denies that concluſion which we draw from it, *that we are reprobats;* but Faith ſweetly ſubjoyns, *As for our tranſgreſſions, thou wilt purge them away.* This is bad *Logick* to deny the Concluſion, but precious Divinity: 2. We would ſay this to you, that you may with a great deal of liberty, make uſe of the dominion of your iniquity, as an argument to plead with *God* for pardon, according to that famous Prayer of *Davids, Pſal.* 25. 11. *For thy names ſake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* And we would ſay likewiſe, that *God* maketh uſe of the Iniquities of the Children of Men, as an argument to provoke himſelf unto Mercy, Yea, even of thoſe Iniquities, which before he hath made uſe of, as an argument of Juſtice. It is ſtrange to parallel and compare theſe two places, *Gen.* 6. 5. with *Gen.* 8. 21. where the reaſon that *God* giveth of the deſtruction of the world is this, becauſe that *every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man, is only evil continually:* And yet, *Chap.* 8. 21. He giveth this as a ground, why he would curſe the world no more for mans ſake, becauſe, ſaith he, *The imagination of mans heart is evil from his youth.*

Now, we told you at the laſt occaſion we ſpoke on theſe words,

words, when ſpeaking upon the ſecond thing of Mortification, which was the extent of it, that a Chriſtian ſhould not only mortifie original ſin, which is here called the *fleſh*, but likewiſe, he ſhould mortifie his predominant Idols, which are here called *affections*; And of theſe two we have ſpoken: There is this likewiſe in the extent of Mortification, that a Chriſtian ſhould mortifie the firſt motions and tentations unto ſin, which are here called *Luſts*. And for clearing what we ſhall ſpeak upon this; We conceive, that to mortifie the firſt motions of ſin do comprehend theſe two, (1.) That a Chriſtian ſhould ſtudy to mortifie the firſt tentations he meets with unto acting or embracing of any particular Luſt. And (2.) That a Chriſtian ſhould ſtudy to avoid all appearances of evil, by which he may be brought to the acting of that Sin. We ſhall not ſtand long to proue that it is the duty of a Chriſtian to do the firſt; it is clear not only from *Jam.* 4. 7. where we are commanded *to reſiſt the Devil*, which comprehendeth even the reſiſting of the firſt motions of Sin, as likewiſe from 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. *Whom reſiſt, ſtedfaſt in the faith*; but likewiſe it is clear from the practice of *David*, *Pſal.* 56. 3. where when Unbelief began to ſtir, he put Faith in exerciſe, *What time* (ſaith he) *I am afraid, I will truſt in thee.* And it is clear from the practice of *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. where there was a meſſenger of Satan ſent to buffet him, he went and *beſought the Lord thrice.* Neither ſhall we ſtand to prove, that it is the duty of a Chriſtian to flee all the appearances of evil, which is clear not only from *Deut.* 12. 30. where it is ſaid, thou ſhalt not *enquire how the Nations ſerve their gods:* Ye may ſuppoſe there was no iniquity in this inquiry; yet becauſe it was the appearance of evil, God did forbid it: as likewiſe from *Deut.* 25. 13, 14. *Thou ſhalt not have in thy bag, diverſe weights, a great and a ſmall; Thou ſhalt not have in thy houſe divers meaſures, a great and a ſmall:* It might be ſuppoſed, that the having of theſe things, when not uſed, was not unlawful, yet the very having of them, (becauſe it was an appearance of evil) was to be eſhewed: See that remarkable

place,

place, Prov. 5. 8. *Come not nigh the door of her house, who is a whore:* and that in *Deut.* 12. 3. where the people are commanded, even to forget the names of Idols. And from *Jude* 21. *To hate the garments ſpotted with the fleſh:* and *Deut.* 16. 19. where it is forbidden for *a Judge to take a gift*, not that there is iniquity in this, but becauſe it is an appearance of evil; leſt he ſhould pervert Judgment, it is forbidden.

Now that which *firſt* we ſhall ſpeak to upon this, That a Chriſtian ſhould flee the firſt motions and appearances of Sin, ſhall be this, to propoſe ſome Conſiderations, which may inforce this duty more ſtrongly upon you. The *Firſt* Conſideration which we propoſe is this, That Iniquity, when reſiſted in its firſt motions, is moſt eaſily conquered and overcome; when ſin is killed in its birth, it is killed with the greateſt facility and eaſineſs: And certainly, when we delay the mortifying of our Luſts, and reſiſt not the Devil, it is no wonder that we are led captive by the hand of our Iniquities: It was an antient Saying, worthy to be practiſed, *Reſiſt the beginnings of evil*, for the remedy is ſtill more difficult in the cloſe, than in the beginning. However, we would give Chriſtians theſe two Directions for this Conſideration. 1. After that, by the power of Grace, ye have overcome the firſt motions of Sin, do not give over your watch, nor ſit down in carnal confidence, for he will again aſſail you, even after you have overcome: It is a remarkable word that is annexed to the cloſe of *Chriſt*'s temptations, *Luke* 4. 13. where, after Satan was foiled moſt remarkably, it is ſaid, *he departed from him for a ſeaſon*; he had a mind to return, though he was overcome. 2. We ſay this, That moſt ordinarily the reſiſting of the motions of Sin, and overcoming of them, if not improved with Humility, is the fore-runner of ſome ſad ſtroke from the hand of the *Lord.*

There is this *ſecond* Conſideration for inviting of you to reſiſt the firſt motions of Sin, and it is this; A Chriſtian that maketh conſcience of this Duty, ordinarily he is bleſſed with moſt divine and precious enjoyments of

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Jesus Christ: Let Christians but try this by experience, when first Sin doth assail them, and if they will but make conscience to resist it, the dew of Heaven shall come down and lye upon their branches; that their glory shall be fresh in them, and they shall be constrained to set up an *Eben-ezer* unto *God*, and to cry forth, *hitherto hath the Lord helped us*: this is clear from Rom. 8. 13. *If ye through the Spirit shall mortifie the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live*; and clear from *Rev.* 2. 17. Where to encourage the man that is in the way of overcoming to persevere *Christ promiseth that he will give him hidden Manna*: And certainly, we think, if we may make allusion to these words, that curse is accomplished in these dayes, to many *I will make the heavens brass, and the earth iron.* There are some upon whom it hath not rained these three years and six months, but they are become as a bottle in the smoak, the marrow of their bones is consumed and dried away.

There is this *Third* consideration that we would propose, and it is this, that the resisting of the motions and first stirrings of corruption, is the way to get the soul under a most divine impression of the sinfulness of Sin: For when was it the Apostle *Paul* cryed out, *O wretched man that I am*? was it not, when there was a Law in his mind wrestling against the Law of his Members? When he was the greatest wrestler, then did Sin appear out of measure sinful unto him. I confess, that distinction which Papists do so much adore, of *Venial* and *mortal Sins*, I think Christians in their practice, do make too much use of. Are there not many Sins, which ye account *venial*, and write this name upon their forehead, this is a *Zoar*, a little thing, and ye desire to be pardoned, when ye bow your knee in the house of *Rimmon*, if you go no further: But certainly, the way to bring the Soul to a divine loathing of all Sin, is to be resisting the first motions of it.

There is this *Fourth* Consideration, Resisting of the *first* motions of Sin, is that which keeps the Grace of Faith much in exercise, especially in an hour of trial and

of

temptation. I think, there is nothing that will darken a Chriſtians evidence ſo much, as the conviction of this, That there was never a Sin did aſſail him, that he reſiſted in its firſt motions and ſtirrings. I confeſs, I think a bad Conſcience is the Mother of Unbelief, which the Apoſtle doth clearly point at, 1 Tim. 3.9. *Holding* (ſaith he) *the myſtery of Faith in a pure conſcience*; as if he had ſaid, That divine and precious gueſt *Faith*, can lodg in no dwelling, but in a pure and undefiled Conſcience: And to make this more clear, that reſiſting of the motions and ſtirrings of Sin, hath influence to preſerve Faith in exerciſe, ſee Rev. 2.17. *To him that overcometh* (that is in the way of overcoming) *will I give a new name*; he ſhall know that his name is written in theſe precious Records of Heaven, and that before the Morning Stars did ſing for joy, e're ever the corner-ſtone of the world was laid, he was engraven upon the heart of that precious One, in indeleble letters which cannot be blotted out: As alſo it is clear, *Rom.* 7. compared with 8. and 1. *verſe*: When was it that *Paul* cried out, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus?* was it not then, when he was wreſtling againſt Corruptions?

And there is this *Laſt* Conſideration, which we ſhall propoſe to enforce this Duty, and it is this, That not reſiſting Sin in its firſt motions, doth ordinarily create and bring to paſs much hardneſs and ſtupidity of heart, when we ſilence our Convictions with lazineſs, and anſwer our reprover with this, *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on?* I ſhall ſay to ſuch, It is a bad *Omen* and ſign that God is upon his way to ceaſe to be ſuch a reprover unto you: I confeſs, there is a difference betwixt ſinning againſt light, and ſinning with light; And we conceive that there are many guilty of the one, that are not guilty of the other: However, if once ye ſhall come this length, as when a temptation doth aſſail you, to make a Covenant of Peace and Agreement with it, ye may expect, if you go to Heaven, *you ſhall be ſafe, but ſo as by fire*: And we confeſs there are ſome whoſe Conſciences may bear them record, That they never knew what it was to reſiſt the

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firſt motions and ſtirrings of Corruption. It is a Leſſon of ſo high a nature, that it would need explication unto them: And think ye that ye can attain unto that living and precious Hope, who never knew to wreſtle with your Sins and Corruptions? O is there ſuch a deluſion as this amongſt you, That ye can reign, though ye fight not, and triumph though ye contend not? Ye may reign to your own apprehenſion as Kings without *Chriſt* this way; but ſhall never reign as Kings with him, if ye do not ſtudy to mortifie your Luſts.

That which *Secondly* we ſhall ſpeak upon, ſhall be to ſhew the reaſon why Chriſtians do not reſiſt Sin in its firſt motions and ſtirrings within them. And we conceive, that it doth either proceed from this, That Chriſtians are not much in the exerciſe of the Grace of Watchfulneſs. I think Temptations ſeaſe oft-times upon a Chriſtians affections before they be aware; hence it is, that when the Apoſtle *Peter* is preſcribing this direction of reſiſting the motions of Sin, he requireth this as an antecedent Duty, that they ſhould be watchful, 1 Pet. 5.8,9. *Be vigilant*; and then, *reſiſt him, ſtedfaſt in the Faith*: When once a Chriſtian hath given over his watch, he is a prey unto his Luſts: We may certainly ſay of him, That he is a City broken down and without Walls, that doth not exerciſe the Grace of Watchfulneſs. Or 2. it doth proceed from this, that Chriſtians are not in a Divine and Spiritual frame to reſiſt Temptations, when they are firſt aſſailed with them. We confeſs, our Spirits oft-times are ſo loadened with earthly Pleaſures, and are ſo much taken up with the paſſing delights of a tranſient World, That when Temptations do come, we do eaſily condeſcend to embrace them: Hence it is that the Apoſtle *James*, when preſſing this exhortation, ſaith, *Reſiſt the Devil*, ſubjoyneth this as a concomitant Duty, Verſ. 9. *Draw near to God*; as if he had ſaid, If Temptation find you at a diſtance with God, then ye may cry out, *Have pity on me*; for then ye are a prey, if ye be not found within ſight of God, and if your hearts do not ſtudy to walk in the ſight of his precious face. As likewiſe, *Peter* doth

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preſcribe this, 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. *Be ſober*, and then, *reſiſt him ſtedfaſt in the faith*: and more clearly it is pointed at, Matth. 26. 41. *Watch and pray, leſt ye enter into Temptation.* And I would only ſay this unto you, It is a moſt high and divine Walk alwaies to be living within ſight of *God*, that when ye go down to the Grave, ye may have this to ſay, I am now to change my place, but not to change my company; Death may be to you but a precious paſſage and tranſition unto a more conſtant and immediat enjoyment of *God*: Or elſe 3. it doth proceed from this, That Chriſtians, when firſt aſſailed with the motions and ſtirrings of Corruptions, cannot find in their hearts to do violence to their own fleſh. I confeſs, theſe two Idols, (which are dependant one upon another) that Idol of *Self*, and that Idol of *Eaſe*, are the Cut-throats of a Chriſtians diligence, and are the great occaſion, why we do not overcome, *Through the blood of the Lamb, & by the word of our Teſtimony*; Think ye that it's an eaſy thing to overcome temptations? I confeſs, thoſe that are not acquainted with it, may probably ſay it is; but this is certain that ſuch kind goeth not out, but by Faſting and Prayer. It coſt *Chriſt* much toil to liberate you from the guilt of Sin, and it will coſt you much toil to liberate your ſelves from the filth of Sin. And there is this *Laſtly* from which it proceeds, that Chriſtians do not mortifie Sin, in its firſt ſtirrings and motions, even becauſe they are not living under an impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of Sin. We conceive, that oft-times when Temptations do aſſail us, we think, *departing from God* a diſpenſible evil, and that which eaſily we may obtain pardon for: But I would preſcribe this unto you, as one of the greateſt Myſteries of Chriſtianity; and bleſſed, bleſſed is he eternally that hath won to it, and it is this, To be living conſtantly under a divine Impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of Sin, that ye may take it up, in its nature, and in its effects. I think, if one ſhould come from the dead, having the chains of everlaſting wrath wreathed about his feet, and the ſhakles of the fury of the Lord wreathed about his hands, and ſhould preach to you, concerning the nature of Sin, and

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how [damnable a thing it is, there are many who would not take much heed to ſuch Doctrine.

Now that which *Thirdly*, we propoſed to ſpeak to from theſe words was, the difficulty to attain to Mortification, which we conceive, was held forth under that word *Crucifie*; which doth import, that Mortification is a lingring work, as crucifying was a lingring death: as likewiſe it doth import, that Mortification is a painful work, as crucifying was one of the moſt painful deaths: And likewiſe it imports the intenſive nature of Mortification, that a Chriſtian ſhould ſtudy not to be content until he kill Corruption: And concerning theſe three we ſhall ſpeak together: And we ſhall point out the difficulty of attaining to Mortification in theſe things. 1. Doth not this point out the difficulty of it, that there is a woful unity of Affection betwixt us and our Luſts? They are dear to us as our right Eye, and our right Hand, and right Foot: And I confeſs, to convince you of that unity that is betwixt you and your Luſts, I think that expreſſion which ordinarily ye uſe, when one is reproving you for your Paſſion, or for your Swearing, may ſuffice; Ye will anſwer, What aileth you at *me*? Which doth ſpeak this, That you ſay, your Luſts and you are *one*. And I confeſs *Paul* hath an expreſſion like this, *Rom.* 7. 8. *I know* (ſaith he) *that in me dwelleth no good thing*. There are two *Me*'s in a Chriſtian; There is a Spiritual and refined *Me*, there is a Carnal and a wicked *Me*; as *Paul* doth diſtinguiſh them in that verſe, *I know* (ſaith he) *that in me dwelleth no good thing*: And yet he ſubjoyneth, *In me to will that is preſent*, which is a good thing. And we confeſs, that word is accompliſhed in the one *Me*. *They are joyned to their Idols, let them alone.* There is this 2. which pointeth out the difficulty of Mortification, and it is the ſtrength of theſe Luſts that are within us; we think the Scripture is ſo abundant in pointing out the ſtrength of Sin, that we need not ſpeak much to it: There is that expreſſion, *Rom.* 8. 2. which is a moſt ſtrange word, it is there called *The law of ſin and death*: As it were, Sin pleads for as much ſubjection from us, as

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if we were tyed by Law to obey it: And in that Verſe, there is a ſweet contrariety of Laws, *The Law of the Spirit of Life hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.* If ſo we may ſpeak, There is, in a manner, one Decree and Statute of Heaven declaring another to be *Null*; For it was a Law in Heaven, that we ſhould be under Death, becauſe we were under Sin: But behold, here is a poſterior Law that doth ſweetly, by Grace, reduce this prior Law, and it is, *The Law of the Spirit of Life.* 3. As likewiſe that expreſſion, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. pointeth forth the ſtrength of Corruption, where he ſaith, we are to fight for *the pulling down of ſtrong holds*, as it were, Sin fortifieth it ſelf within our boſome: And we confeſs, if this were believed, we would ſtudy to mortifie our Corruptions with a great deal of more pains and conſtancy. 4. There is this likewiſe, which pointeth it out, and it is, The deceitfulneſs of our Luſts, and the ſubtilty which they vent in their deceiving of us; which is clear from that expreſſion, Jam. 1. 14. *When a man* (ſaith he) *is drawn away, and entiſed of his Luſts*: The word there that is rendered *entiſed*, is taken from the Fiſhers, who deceive the ſilly fiſhes with a bait of apparent pleaſure. We confeſs, theſe *two* are the great obſtructions of a Chriſtians progreſs to Heaven, Temptations of fear, and Temptations from advantage: which *two*, if they were removed, we might with greater facility overcome our Luſts, and ſing a Song of Triumph over our Idols: oft-times that expreſſion is mentioned, *The deceitfulneſs of Sin*: We confeſs, if this were believed, we would uſe a more divine and holy Prudence, leſt we ſhould be enſnared. And to ſhut up our Diſcourſe, as to what we have been ſpeaking ſo long; We ſhall only ſpeak a little to obviat any miſtake that may be about the difficulty of attaining to Mortification, which ſhall include the certainty of overcoming alſo

And that which *Firſt* we would ſay unto you is this; Be perſwaded that there is more divine ſatisfaction in the reſiſting of your Luſts, and wreſtling againſt them, than there is in the actual fruition of them all; *Stollen waters*

waters are ſweet, ſaith the adulterous Perſon, but at laſt they ſhall be convinced of the contrary; and, *Bread of deceit is pleaſant to the mouth, but he knoweth not that the dead are there*, &c. And we think the *Apoſtle* ſweetly chideth the *Romans* concerning this thing, *What fruit have you of theſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* It is ſad to think upon that woful diſappointment that many ſhall meet with.

Secondly, We ſay, There is a Divine certainty of a Chriſtians overcoming, let the difficulties be never ſo many; and (O beloved in the Lord!) are not theſe glad tidings from a far Countrey, and may they not be as cold Water to a thirſty mans Soul, that the Chriſtian ſhall at laſt overcome? And there are theſe *four* things, that ſpeak the certainty of a Chriſtians overcoming: 1. The Faithfulneſs and the Love of *Jeſus Chriſt* is laid in pledg for our overcoming, which is clear, Joh.6.39. *And this is the Fathers will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt Day:* And we confeſs, this is certain, That it is more of *Chriſts* concernment, that a Believer ſhould overcome, than it is of his own. O! what Songs to the *Faithfulneſs* of *Chriſt*, what Songs to his *Love* ſhall be ſung that day, when the precious troop of his Saints ſhall return from the Day of Judgment, that general infare ſhall be of all thoſe that have been begotten unto a lively hope, when they ſhall convey *Chriſt* home, through the Ports of the *New Jeruſalem*, every one having a Harp of God in his hand, and ſhall cry forth, *Halelujah, Halelujah to him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, Halelujah for ever and ever:* That Song ſhall have no period, though it have a beginning. 2. This likewiſe pointeth out the certainty of overcoming; *Chriſt* hath overcome, and therefore the Chriſtian ſhall overcome. It was the ſweet Divinity of the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Heb.*2.9,10. There is a promiſe (ſaith he) that *All things ſhall be put under his feet*, but *we ſee not that Promiſe accompliſhed*, ſaith he: *One thing we ſee accompliſhed, which is a pledg of it, we ſee Jeſus Chriſt,*

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for the ſuffering of death, crowned with Glory and with Honour, Chriſt is in Heaven, and he muſt be there, as a Pledg of our coming there, whoſe nature he took up. It is clear alſo, *John* 16. laſt, *Be of good chear*, ſaith he, *for I have overcome the world*; which is a pledg and certain Token, that ye ſhall once overcome at laſt. 3. This alſo points forth the certainty of overcoming; *viz.* That that ſame Power which was exerciſed in bringing Chriſt from Death, and in making him to overcome Principalities and Powers, is communicated to Believers to make them overcome; as is clear from *Epheſ.* 1. 19, 20. where it is ſaid, *That power that wrought mightily in Chriſt to raiſe him from the dead, doth alſo work in thoſe that believe.* O! Chriſtians, and Heirs of the grace of life, believe this, that Omnipotency is engaged on your behalf; And have you not learned that firſt point of the Creed, that *there is nothing impoſſible to God*; And ſo when ye are conſtrained ſometimes to cry out, *Who ſhall ſtand before the children of Anak?* Content your ſelves with this, That there is nothing too hard for him to overcome. 4. This *laſtly* pointeth it out; *viz.* That divine and inviſible knot of Union that is betwixt Chriſt and his Members: Is Chriſt above? the Members muſt follow: For ye know, though Chriſt be the fulneſs of the Saints, yet the Saints are the fulneſs of Chriſt: there is a ſweet mutual fulfilling and accompliſhing each one of another: Know ye not that word, *That where I am, there they may be alſo*: I think of all the words that Chriſt ever ſpoke to the Father, that word was the moſt imperious and commanding-like word, which he hath Joh. 17. 24. *I will* (ſaith he) *that thoſe that thou haſt given me, be where I am.* It was not his Prayer which came that length, he willed it, and would not be contradicted: And certainly, there is nothing that may comfort you in the hour of trial ſo much as this, Chriſt is upon his way to relieve you, and ye are upon your way of overcoming: And I ſhall only ſay that word, which ought to be your practice, 1 Joh. 5. 18. *Whoſoever is born of God, ſinneth not, and that wicked one toucheth him not:*

not: Like that ordinary expreſſion, which you uſe, you ſhould not rub wet cloth with him nor touch him. And to theſe that are walking in the broad paths of Sin; I ſhall only ſay that to you, Job 21. 20. *His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction, and he ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.* Your Eyes and your Taſte ſhall be ſatisfied; and that word which is in verſ. 30. *He ſhall be preſerved to the day of deſtruction*, or as the word in the Original, *He ſhall be reſerved to the day of wrath*; as it were, there ſhall be a combination of Wrath and Juſtice that ſhall ſeiſe upon you. Now to him who is upon his way, who ſhall come and will not tarry, and whoſe reward is with him, we deſire to give praiſe.

SERMON VIII.

Gal. 6. 14. *By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*

CHriſtianity doth conſiſt in a bleſſed exchange of affections, a ſoul dying in its affections and reſpects to all things that are here below; and a living and advancing in its deſires towards him, who is that bleſſed and univerſal good. It ought to be that arch-plot and great deſign, which Chriſtians ought to promove, even to attain to that Original Unity, which once was in mans affections towards *God*. O! what bleſſedneſs did *Adam* enjoy while he did ſtand in that eſtate wherein he was created, he having a bleſſed Harmony of all his affections towards *God*, and likewiſe there being a moſt divine Correſpondence and bleſſed Familiarity betwixt Heaven and Earth, betwixt him who ſitteth on the Throne, and him who ſat on the Footſtool: But that was moſt eminently verified, that *Man being in honour did not abide.* O! What anxious and perplexing thoughts had

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poor *Adam* (no doubt) ſome Hours after his Fall, when he did reflect upon that which was once his condition, and did compare it with that which was now his lot: might not he have taken up that lamentation over himſelf, *Man in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity?* And likewiſe he might have had that Proverb taken up of himſelf, *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, ſon of the morning?* Now, Man by loſing that bleſſed unity that was in his affections, hath contracted a woful and infinite diverſity in his affections towards theſe things here below: So that thoſe affections which did once ſweetly run in one channel toward God, are now divided and ſeparated in many ſtreams, toward thoſe things that are ſo much below him: And there is nothing beneath the *Son*, that leadeth captive ſo many of our deſires as the *World*: Therefore it were your advantage to be *crucified to the world, and to have the world crucified to you*, that you might diſcover that endleſs vanity, and unſpeakable vexation of ſpirit that is in all things that are here: The world is a perfect *compend* and compleat *epitome* of all miſery: *God* himſelf is that *compend* of all Bleſſedneſs, ſo that there is nothing deſirable that we can take up under this, but it is moſt eminently in him. Yet for Chriſtians to be promoving in that bleſſed work of having themſelves crucified to the world, and having the world crucified to them, is a duty that is much undervalued in our days. But, O! how ſuitable is it for thoſe, who are Heirs and Expectants of that bleſſed Hope (and everlaſting Enjoyment) of being with *God*, who is the Judge of all Fleſh, and with *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and with the innumerable Company of holy Angels, and to be made Heirs and Coheirs with *Jeſus Chriſt*. Is it not below you to be much taken up in your vain and anxious purſuits after thoſe things that are here below? The objects of the deſires of your immortal ſpirits ought to be more high than things below, and ought to be more divine than things humane; your Affections ought to *be aſcending as pillars of ſmoak*, and ye ſhould be breathing after that bleſſed Day, when

there ſhall be a confinment of all youv Affections on him. We have at ſome occaſions ſpoken unto you, of the Grace of Humility, and of the Grace of Love; the one teaching us to undervalue our ſelves, the other teaching us to value God: And had you been much taken up in the ſpiritual and living Exerciſe of thoſe, there ſhould not have been much difficulty at this time, to perſuade you to the Duty of Mortification. We ſhall not inſiſt long in telling what Mortification is; (1.) It is a conſtant and bleſſed endeavour of the Chriſtian to remove out of his way all thoſe impediments, that do interrupt the Exerciſe of Love: (2.) As likewiſe, it is that which entertaineth a conſtant and perpetual *antipathy* and holy indignation againſt every thing, thorow which his Conformity with *God*, and that perfect Likeneſs and Similitude with his Maker, might be in any way impared. Mortification doth not conſiſt in thoſe unconſtant and unequal Exerciſes of mortifying our Luſts, it conſiſts not in thoſe violent flaſhes of holy Zeal and indignation againſt our Iniquities: For though that indignation be violent for its time, yet it doth quickly evanith and paſs away: But thatGrace of Mortification muſt be in a conſtant, and daily exerciſe; We ſolace our ſelves in the Chambers of our Im agery, by beholding our Idols pourtrayed upon the wall; We do ſtudy to receive ſatisfaction in our apprehenſions of them, when we cannot receive ſatisfaction in the actual fruition of them. Such is likewiſe the woful deſperateneſs of the Hearts of the Children of Men, That when *God* hath put a Worm to the root of that Gourd, under the ſhadow of which, we uſe to ſolace our ſelves, we cry forth from a diſcontended humour, *It is better for us to die than to live:* O! There are many here, to whom it would be death, to outlive their Idols: Their Idols and they are pleaſant in their Lives, and they deſire not to be divided in their Deaths. (3.) Mortification doth not conſiſt in that partial and divided way of mortfying our Corruptions, we taking vengeance upon ſome of our Luſts; but with *Saul*, ſpareing it *who is the King of our Luſts*. *Naaman* the *Syrian* muſt

muſt have an indulgence of *bowing his knee in the houſe of Rimmon*: *Lot* muſt plead for the ſparing of *Zoar*, that ſmall thing: And ſo when we are intending that work of Mortification, we plead for the ſparing of theſe things, which we call *Zoars*, theſe ſmall, but indeed our Maſter-corruptions. Certainly that *Evangelick* Mortification which is required of us, doth not conſiſt in this; for we muſt intend an univerſal Separation betwixt us and all our Idols, we muſt caſt away ale our Idols *to the moles and to the bats*, and *we muſt defile the covering of them, and he alone muſt be the cover of our eyes*: He never knew what the Grace of Mortification meant, who never ſet about the accompliſhment af the ruine of that great and Maſter-idol which domineereth over him; And we conceive, that the beſt and moſt ſolid way of knowing our growth in Mortification, is by reflecting upon the decay of theſe idols, which are our predominants; other Sins which aſſail us may decay, and their ſtrength wax weak, and yet Mortification not be on the growing hand; for there are many of our Luſts, that rather die by conceſſion, than by conſtraint: there are many of our Idols that rather go out of us, than are caſt out by us.

Now the *firſt* thing that a Chriſtian ought to endeavor to mortifie, is his love to the world, which was the practice of this holy man: In the words he pointeth out unto us the way, wherein he did attain to this compleat and Spiritual Mortification to the world, in theſe words, *by whom*, which do relate unto *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is made mention of in the fore-going words: or, as the words may be rendered, *By which I am crucified to the world*, and ſo they relate unto the Croſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Now under this notion of *being crucified*, 1. He doth certainly hold forth unto us, That great difficulty that is in accompliſhing the work of Mortification, And under this name of *being Crucified*, he doth certainly hold forth unto us, the longſomneſs of the time that we muſt ſpend, before we can attain compleat Mortification: *Crucifying* being one of the moſt lent and ſlow of all violent Deaths; Mortification is not a work of one day, it will coſt us

many days and years, before we ſhall cruſh the head of our Luſts, before that bleſſed Promiſe ſhall be fulfilled, that *All things ſhall be put in ſubjection unto us*: Sin doth moſt eaſily invade us, and take poſſeſſion of us, but it is not eaſily diſpoſſeſſed; For except we had the infinite ſtrength of him, who is *Jehovah*, we might ſit down, and cloſe our hands, and never intend to oppoſe theſe Idols under whoſe ſubjection we are. 2. This word *being crucified*, doth likewiſe hold out the Painfulneſs and Uneaſineſs of this work of Mortification (as you have heard) *Crucifying* being of all violent deaths moſt bitter: we muſt certainly be mortified to our Eaſe, before we can be mortified to our Luſts: we muſt travel in birth, before the Grace of Mortification can be formed in us. It is a woful evil in theſe days, that moſt people walk under this apprehenſion, That there is not much difficulty to mortifie their Corruptions, but it is a token, that they never knew what it was to mortifie them, who never knew the difficulty of Mortificatiom. 3. The *Third* thing pointed out under this word of *Being crucified* is, That there is a woful reluctancy and indiſpoſition of ſpirit which we have to this bleſſed exerciſe of Mortifying our Corruptions; we have as great unwillingneſs unto it, as though we were to go to ſubject our ſelves to ſome violent death. O! How is Vanity and Corruption joyned to the ſpirits of the Sons of Men: How loth are we to have that woful and accurſed union betwixt us and our Luſts diſſolved? O! How many Orators and Procurators within our ſelves have we to plead for this, *The ſparing of our Luſts*; yet we may be perſuaded of this, That if we be not the ruine of our Iniquity, Iniquity ſhall certainly be our ruine. O! How may we bluſh and be confounded *ſeven* days, that we ſhould be ſo loth to have a ſeparation betwixt us and theſe things; by which our diſtance with *God*, and eſtrangement from him, is ſo much increaſed! This Vanity is unſpeakable, that we ſhould be ſo averſe from that wherein our eternal Bleſſedneſs doth ly, *viz.* In having that woful band, which we have wreathed about our own necks, taken off by the bleſſed and everlaſting hands of

him

him who hath died and riſen again, to accompliſh this bleſſed deſign. 4. *Laſtly*, Under this word, *Being crucified*, is held out unto us that compleat meaſure and degree of Spiritual Mortification, that this holy Man attained to, he was as one dead to things below; he was not much exerciſed in joy for having the world, neither was he exerciſed in grief, for wanting the things of it; he was as a man dead, which could not be moved by any of theſe things: We do not ſay that *Paul* was altogether a *Stoick*, without all Paſſions of Grief and Sorrow, or of Joy; But we only ſay this, That he did not grieve for the want of the world, as thoſe who have no hope; neither did he ſo joy in having the world, as thoſe who have not a more divine and high ſpring of Conſolation; He was clothed with a holy indifferency, and a bleſſed neutrality in having or wanting theſe things: It was none of *Paul's* deſires to have the world, He had learned that divine and excellent art of being content with every eſtate of life; He knew not what it was to murmur. And it were certainly much our Advantage, to be provoked to jealouſie, when we reflect upon the practice of this holy Man. I conceive, That if all that are here would examine themſelves, by how many degrees their Mortification to the world doth come ſhort of this, they might ſit down, and conclude with themſelves, That they are yet to begin to mortifie; Yea, There are many here, to whom we may ſay, that they are ſo far from being clothed with a holy indifferency in having the things of the world, that they are clothed with that woful and indiſpenſible neceſſity of purſuing after theſe things: This is the language of the moſt part, *Give, give*, men hurrying themſelves on in multitudes of hopes, and of fears, and of expectations, and that with an infinit number of deſires; And what is the end and reſult of all theſe things, but *Vanity and vexation of ſpirit?*

Now that you may be helped to attain this concerning duty, to be mortified to the world, we ſhall propoſe theſe things unto you: *Firſt*, Be much taken up in a holy contemplation and ſpiritual beholding of theſe unſearchable Excel-

Excellencies that are in *God.* If once the ſoul of the Creature were elevated to behold Him, there ſhould not be much difficulty, to be much mortified to the world: Were we once admitted to draw by a lap of the vail, and behold that uncreated glory and unexpreſſible Majeſty that is treaſured up in him, Mortification ſhould then be no great difficulty unto us; this is clearly held out here, for *Paul* doth tell how he had this Grace of Mortification, it was by beholding *That pleaſant Plant of renown, Jeſus Chriſt.* This is clear likewiſe, 1 John 5.5. *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God?* Did we once believe that Fundamental Article of Faith, that he who was crucified upon the tree, was indeed the *Son of God*, we ſhould moſt eaſily win to this concerning-Duty of Mortification. We may reduce all the cauſes of our little growth in this bleſſed work, to that woful ignorance of *God*, wherewith moſt of us are clothed: Were there a door opened to us in Heaven, and were we in the Spirit to behold him who ſits upon the Throne, whoſe countenance is like a *Sardine* ſtone, and about whoſe Throne there is that Rainbow; could we penetrat thorow theſe Vails, wherewith both he and we are covered, we being clothed with the vail of our Ignorance, and likewiſe with the Vail of our Impurity; And He being clothed with theſe *two* moſt glorious Vails, the Vail of his Unſearchableneſs, and the Vail of that unexpreſſible Majeſty that is in him, the one confounding the Judgment, and the other confounding the Affections: So that Affection and Judgment in a manner are put to a non-exerciſe, but both theſe do ſweetly reſolve in that one bleſſed act of Admiration. We need not ſpeak much in the commendation of thoſe unto you, who were never acquainted with him, that ſo ye might be perſuaded to forſake your old Lovers; We ſhall only ſay this, Silence and Admiration ſpeak leaſt, and yet they ſpeak moſt: There is more divine Oratory in a holy Silence, and more excellent expreſſions in a bleſſed admiration, than all our inventions can reach: O what can man ſpeak of him who is that Unſearchable and Incomprehenſible Majeſty?

This

This may appear a *Paradox* to you, that Silence ſhould ſpeak, and Admiration commend: Yet it is no *Paradox*, when the object of our commendation, is by infinit degrees exalted above our Bleſſing and our Praiſes. O! Men of the world, will you once be perſuaded to make that bleſſed divorce betwixt you and your Idols, that there may be an everlaſting conjunction betwixt *God* and you. O! If ye had ſo much divine Underſtanding, as to judge of things according to their real worth, *He alone ſhould be exalted in that day:* O come, ſee and behold what infinit Sweetneſs is treaſured up in him, thoſe ſprings wherewith ye delight your ſelves, ſhall ere long dry up; But *He* is that high and infinit Spring, which alwaies floweth out, and yet is not impaired. The *Second* thing whereby we may attain to this bleſſed duty of Mortification to the world is, by reflecting how paſſing and tranſient thoſe things are, wherewith the Sons of Men uſe to ſolace themſelves. *Paul* doth preſs Mortification to the world, from this conſidration; 1 Cor. 7.31. *The faſhion of this world paſſeth away:* The word is moſt *emphatic*, this *Sthema* and repreſentatiou of the world, or this ſtage-play of the world, it paſſeth away; therefore, *Let thoſe that rejoyce be as though they rejoyced not, and be careful for nothing:* this is clear, 1 *Joh.*2.17. and, 1 *Peter* 4.7. did we ſolidly believe how changable thoſe enjoyments of the world are, could we hurry our ſelves ſo much in our purſuits after them? Thoſe who are lifted up in their enjoyments this day, may be thruſt down low the next day: *Job*, who was a man enriched in many things, yet a few days, yea we may ſay, a few hours made a ſad and ſtrange exchange: We may aſſirm, with great aſſurance of truth, *Surely man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity:* the word (*at his beſt eſtate*) may be rendered thus, *Man although he ſtand, Etiamſi conſtitutus*; for in your moſt fixed and ſetled condition in the world, this is the *Emblem* and *Motto* of your ſtate, *Vanity, moſt ſubject to change*: And why ſhould you weary your ſelves in the fire for that which is very Vanity? 3. The *Third* thing, by which ye may attain this Duty of Mortification,

it

is to be much taken up in the consideration of the brevity of your Life: I suppose, that if we were walking more in the house of Mourning, and were believing that truth, *That it is appointed for man once to die*, and that shortly, we must be brought home unto that unchangeable estate of Life: O! How would this allay us in our pursuits? I think this were a little water, which we might mix with our wine, when there is greatest confidence of Creature-contentments; lest the foam of this wine should distemper our head, we may mix it with this water, *The brevity of our life.* It is a sweet subject for meditation when we are most high, to be much in the consideration of this, That within a few days we shall be most low. What is your Life but a Vapour, which doth quickly evanish, and doth but appear for a little? Suppose the whole Creation should stay with you during all your time, yet how short would your enjoyment be? What is mans life, but a hand-breadth, a four-fingers breadth? There is Morning, Forenoon, Afternoon, and Night, all which do amount to a Day? There is Infancy, Youth, Man-hood, and Old-age, and these do quickly evanish and pass away. How many are hurried into Eternity, in the first step of their days, in their Infancy? And again, how many in their Youth? And we have frequent experience, That many in their Man-hood, and in the flower of their age, that sentence cometh forth, *Return ye children of men:* And there is not one amongst an hundred, that doth attain to that utmost period that Nature doth allow; And what though ye did live *fourscore* years, which is the utmost period that Nature hath allowed, yet doth your time quickly evanish and flee away? Why do you then solace your selves with those things that cannot eternally remain with you? When ye go down to the grave, you can take nothing of these things with you: For in all points as you came, so shall ye go; and what profit will it be then, that ye have laboured for the wind? The *Fourth* Help to attain it, is this, Be much in the mortifying of those Corruptions which cannot be entertained, but by entertaining also this woful Sin of Covetousness: There are some

Corrup-

Corruptions, which have ſo near affinity to, as likewiſe dependence upon this ſin, that if theſe be not cruſhed, we cannot attain to this duty of Mortification, ſuch as *Prodigality* and *Pride*, two grand enemies, to the accompliſhment of this bleſſed deſign: and we would begin to cruſh theſe before we begin to accompliſh this. *Fifthly* be much taken up in reflecting upon that bleſſed Hope, and that Grace which ſhall be brought unto you at the revelation of *Jeſus Chriſt*. *Peter* preſſeth ſobriety in all things here below, by this argument, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. *Be ſober*; and he giveth this reaſon of it, *for the grace that ſhall be brought unto you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt:* O! were we much taken up in beholding that bleſſed eſtate of life, which the ſouls of juſt men made perfect ſhall have with *God*, where we ſhall enjoy fully and yet not loath; where ſhall be an everlaſting conjunction betwixt deſire and enjoyment of him who is the Perſon beloved, ſo that all it doth receive, is more to provoke its appetite, than to ſatisfie its deſires. *Laſtly* be much in the conſideration of that day, when all the families of the earth ſhall appear before him *in the valley of deciſion*. This indeed would help us to much Mortification to the things of the world, as is clear from *Eccleſ.* 11. 9. had we the faith of that day engraven upon our Spirits, that we muſt render an account of our ways, O! how wary would we be of engaging with Vanity. I think the great cauſe why Sin hath ſuch an univerſal Dominion over the Sons of Men, becauſe we do not ſolidly believe that there is ſuch a Day approaching, when we ſhall all appear before the Judgment Seat of him, who *ſhall not judg after the ſeeing of the eye, nor ſhall reprove after the hearing of the ear, but ſhall judge righteous judgment:* The terrour of the Lord would certainly perſuade us, if we did believe this. O! What a holy unwillingneſs ſhould we have to walk in the paths of our Idols!

Now we ſhall ſhut up our Diſcourſe with this, be perſuaded once to begin that work of Mortification, and eſpecially in mortifying your love to the world: He that returneth Victor after war with his Idols, we may call him *Joſeph*, for he ſhall be as a *fruitful Bough whoſe*

Branches

Branches run over the wall. If once you ſpoil that grand and arch-rebel, who doth ſo much oppoſe you, in a manner, you ſhould ſtand alone and ſing a Triumph, and they would flee when none purſueth; *We ought be ſtrong as a lyon, and who ſhould rouſe us up?*

Of Spiritual Contentment.

SERMON IX.

Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.*

IT was *Adam*'s Ignorance of this Divine Myſtery of Chriſtianity, *To be content with every eſtate wherein he was placed*, that did bring him down from that high pinacle of his excellency, and did degrade him from that Primitive Glory, wherewith he was clothed; For he not being content with that precious and excellent lot, wherein *God* had placed him, but coveting after a more noble and excellent Being, he came exceedingly ſhort of his deſign. And ſuch is the *Athenian* and woful frame of Spirit wherewith men are poſſeſſed, that they can fancy no bleſſedneſs in what they are; but imagine a great bleſſedneſs to be in what they are not: hence is it that men do covet the lot of others, and are diſſatisfied with their own eſtate and condition: And certainly the Affections of Men, while they are living under theſe Spheres which are in perpetual motion, can never be ſatisfied, nor be at reſt: which was the obſervation of that Maſter of Experiences, Prov. 27. 20. *Hell and deſtruction are never full, ſo the eyes of man are never ſatisfied*; and as he ſaith, Eccleſ. 1. 8. *The Eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing:* And we may likewiſe adde, That the heart is not ſatisfied with enjoying; And it is certainly thorow the deceitfulneſs of the Spirit of Man, and that inviſible root of Pride, that every

every lot and condition of life is ſubject unto Satiety and Loathing: Private men do envy the greatneſs of Princes, and Princes do envy the quiet repoſe of private Men, though they will not deſcend, nor reduce themſelves unto that eſtate, but do alwaies fear that, which ſometimes they are conſtrained to deſire: And believe me, a Chriſtians ſitting down ſeriouſly, to contemplate and view what an infinit multitude of hopes, fears and deſires the Spirit of Man is poſſeſſed with; As likewiſe to behold how that *Vanity and vexation of ſpirit*, is engraven upon the choiceſt lot that a Chriſtian can meet with here, he may be provoked to look out at the windows of his priſon-houſe, and long for that precious day, when *Chriſt ſhould be as a Roe, or a young Hinde coming over theſe mountains of Bether*, waiting to be exalted to that precious and excellent eſtate of life, where there ſhall be neither loathing, nor longing: *Abel*, who hath been the firſt poſſeſſor of Heaven of all the houſe and family of *Adam*, and hath dwelt in it near *ſix thouſand* years, yet there is not in him the leaſt inclination or motion to change, or alter his eſtate; There is no loathing in Heaven, nor deſire to remove thence: And, believe me, this divine myſtery of Contentment with every lot and condition in which a Chriſtian is placed, is not eaſily attained. O What repinings hath the unmortified ſpirit of man at the diſpenſations of *God*, in regulating his lot and eſtate, which doth alone ſpeak forth the *Atheiſm* of our heart: For it is, as it were, man propoſing a model and form unto *God*, how he ſhould rule and govern the World. I think Chriſtians are as much ſubject to the faſhion of this contempt and pride as any. It was a noble Saying of one, in the commendation of victory over a mans ſelf, *Tunc omnia regna tenebis, cum poteris rex eſſe tui*, Thou ſhalt then be made a poſſeſſor of all Kingdoms, when thou ſhalt be ruler and king over thy ſelf. And no doubt, one that is once mortified to this paſſion of Diſcontent, may dwell upon the Mountains of *Ararat*, in the midſt of all revolutions and changes that are here below; ſuch a Chriſtian may ſweetly contemplate the overturning

turning of States and Commonwealths, and may patiently endure every lot that doth befal him, and poſſeſs his Soul in patience: And certainly, if men knew but this one thing, That the whole circumference of the Earth is but one point of the Univerſe, and that all time that hath been, is, or ſhall be, is but one inſtant, in compariſon of Eternity, they would not mind the world ſo much: And what is Man but a part of that point? For what is his Life, but a ſmall part of that inſtant? And why then ſhould man anxiouſly complain, to ſpend a part of a moment in enduring the moſt anxious and ſad things that can befal him? And (as *Chriſt* doth moſt divinely ſpeak) *Can a man by taking thought, adde one cubit to his ſtature?* What poor advantage hath a man by his diſcontentment and ſorrow, if it be not, to render himſelf more miſerable? We may ſay of Heavenly-mindedneſs and of Contentment, they are like *Hippocrates*'s Twins, that were born together, were well and ſick together, and lived and died together; ſo do theſe live and die together, they are two ſweet companions, that alwayes go along together, and cannot be divided.

But to deſcend a little more to the words, you have *Paul* in them obviating any miſconſtruction, that the *Philippians* might have of his joy, which he expreſſeth in the former verſe, as if he had been one that was coveting great things for himſelf, or deſiring to be great in the world, no ſaith he, *I ſpeak not theſe things becauſe of want*: which formerly I had, and is now made up, for, ſaith he, *I have learned in every eſtate that I am, therewith to be content*: There is no lot, ſaith *Paul*, but I can patiently endure it, and can with a Divine complacency carry my ſelf under it: And this he proveth in the 12. Verſe, *I know*, ſaith he, *how to be debaſed*, I am inſtructed in this Divine art, how to walk ſoberly under debaſement, and *I know*, ſaith he, *how to abound*: I am not one that is puft up with a proſperous lot in the world: And leſt this aſſertion of *Paul*'s ſhould ſeem to be a boaſting beyond his line, and of being exalted above meaſure, he doth ſweetly ſubjoyn that humble aſſertion, *I can*

do

do all things through Christ that ſtrengtheneth me: As if he had ſaid, do not miſtake me, or conceive me under a more divine and high notion than ye ought, for I am but a poor and ſinful man, who can do nothing of my ſelf; but as I am over-acted by a divine and ſupreme hand. I am enabled by Chriſt to triumph over the moſt adverſe and ſiniſtrous lot that can befal me.

The words which we have read, are moſt ſignificant and *emphatick* in the Original; That word which is here rendered *Content*, is *All-ſufficient*, and ſo the words may ſweetly run thus, *I have learned in every eſtate wherein I am, to be all-ſufficient*; of which that word, *Prov.* 14. 14. Is a ſweet Commentary, *The Back-ſlider in heart ſhall be filled with the fruit of his own way, but a godly man ſhall be ſatisfied from himſelf.* In a manner, there is a well-ſpring of everlaſting conſolation within the Chriſtian, which maketh him endure every anxious lot. And no doubt, that word, *I have learned*, doth both ſpeak the difficulty of attaining this myſtery of divine contentment, as likewiſe it ſpeaketh out that ignorance of this divine and noble end, wherewith *Paul* was once poſſeſſed: I was once, ſaith he, as rude as any in the knowledg of this thing, but now through the underſtanding and wiſdom of *God*, I am made perfect in the knowledg of theſe things. And that word, *in every eſtate*, doth exceedingly commend that great height of Chriſtianity, unto which *Paul* had attained, there was no lot could fall wrong to him: Nay, even continuance of afflictions, which was *Paul*'s caſe, and is one of the greateſt occaſions of impatience imaginable. A Chriſtian, when firſt he meets with a croſs, may be provoked to ſalute it, and embrace it, but if it continue long upon him, then he crieth forth, *Why art thou unto me as an enemy?* Then beginneth he to call in queſtion the loving kindneſs of the *Lord*, and to complain, *That he hath ſhut up his mercies in everlaſting forgetfulneſs*; though we may ſay, in the day that a Chriſtian ſhall be paſſing *thorow the valley of the ſhadow of death*, he ſhall be ſweetly convinced of all his impatiency, and ſhall be conſtrained to engrave that *Motto* upon

the door of his everlaſting reſt, *He hath done all things well.* O! What thoughts will ye then have of theſe riſings and debatings of ſpirit wherewith ye have been poſſeſſed? We may imagine, and not without ſome ground, that a great part of Eternity ſhall be ſpent in Interrogations; *Chriſt* ſhall interrogate us, If we lacked any thing while we were here below, and we ſhall be conſtrained to anſwer, *Nothing*, even in that day when he ſent us forth without Scrip, or Money, or Sandals, or any thing elſe, that did belong to us. O! We ſhall then be conſtrained to ſubſcribe to the *infinit Wiſdome of God*, in regulating of our lot.

Now in ſpeaking upon this Divine Quality and Duty of Divine Contentment, (which we conceive, is a duty moſt requiſit in theſe days) we ſhall not inſiſt long in pointing out what this divine Grace of Contentment is; But we conceive, it includeth not only this, a ſweet and compoſed frame of ſpirit, under every anxious lot and diſpenſation with which we meet, to which that word is a confirmation, *Levit.* 10. 3. where it is ſaid of *Aaron*, when his ſons were cut off, *He held his peace*, and Pſal. 62. 1. *Truly my ſoul waiteth upon the Lord:* But the words in the Original are theſe, *Truly my ſoul is ſilent unto God*, as they are rendered in the Margin; as if he had ſaid, it doth not fret, nor is diſquieted, becauſe of any thing that he carveth out unto thee. Likewiſe this Grace of Contentment includeth a holy Complacency, and ſweet ſerenity, and calmneſs of ſpirit under every lot, to which that word is a Commentary, *Jam.* 1. 2. *Count it all joy when you fall into divers Temptations*, and *Rom.* 5. 3. *We glory in Tribulation.* We ſhall not dwell long upon this, to prove that it is the Duty of a Chriſtian to be content with every eſtate wherein God ſhall put him: It being clear, 1 Timot. 6. 8. *Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content*, and Heb. 13. 5. *Be content with theſe things that you have*; and *Jam.* 4. 7. and *Luk.* 3. 14. And we may ſay, If a Chriſtian made the world to be his ſervant only, little would content him; But if once he make the world his maſter and lord of his affections,

then

then his Deſires will be infinite, and cannot at all be ſatisfied. Neither ſhall we ſtand long to inveigh againſt that too much addictedneſs of man to thoſe paſſing and tranſient vanities of the world: We conceive there are theſe *three* things, which men do moſt earneſtly covet: There is Pleaſure, Riches, and Honour; And certainly, theſe are below an immortal Spirit to fix its deſires upon: Would ye have *Solomons* verdict of Riches, O! ye that truſt in uncertain Riches? Ye have itſweetly expreſſed, Prov. 23.5. *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not:* In a manner, Riches have not a being, for *they take wings to themſelves and they flee away*, as *Solomon* doth moſt ſweetly ſpeak of it, Eccl. 5.11. *If Riches increaſe, what profit* (ſaith he) *is there to the owner thereof, ſave to behold them with his eyes?* All that the owner of Riches hath, is the ſeeing of them, which a man, who is a paſſer by, may likewiſe have, though he be not a poſſeſſor of them: And hence is that word, *Luke* 14. where the man deſiring to be excuſed for not coming to Chriſt, ſaith of himſelf, *I have bought a piece of ground, and muſt needs go and ſee it*; all his enjoyment of it was comprehended in that one poor thing, *to behold it*; And as for honour & glory, which ſpirits, that are more refined, purſue after, I would only have them know that one word, *Pſal.* 62. 9. *Men of high degree are a lie, and men of low degree are vanity*; as if he had ſaid, Any preheminency that one hath an excellent lot in the world above a poor one, doth conſiſt in this, the one is a vanity, and the other is a lying vanity, ſpeaking ſomewhat to be in him, which is not really in him; and *Act.* 25.23. where, ſpeaking of *Bernice*, that came in with great pomp and glory unto the Senate-houſe, the word that is there rendered *Pomp and Glory*, is this, he came in with a great fantaſie, μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας, with a great ſhow and image, without any thing in reality: And as for the pleaſures of the world, with which theſe *Epicurean* ſpirits are ſo much beſotted, mark that verdict of *Solomon* concerning theſe things, *Vanity of vanities, and all things are vanity and vexation of ſpirit*: And *what can the man do that cometh*

eth after the king? If *Solomon* found no more, no doubt none that cometh after him, can find any more.

Now we ſhall ſhew firſt the Cauſes and Principles, from whence diſcontentment doth flow, under any anxious or ſad lot that doth befal you, and then propoſe ſome Conſiderations to help you to wreſtle againſt it. Now for the firſt, we conceive that it doth either proceed from a Chriſtians not being much in the exerciſe of Self-examination, as is clear, Pſal. 4.4. *Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be ſtill*; implying, that the compendious way unto Submiſſion and Contentment under any lot, is to be much in Self-examination: And certainly, Self-examination hath much influence upon Contentment under any lot, becauſe ſuch an one doth moſt accuratly take up theſe imperfections and blemiſhes that are in him, ſo that inſtead of complaining, he is conſtrained to wonder and cry forth, *Why ſhould a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his Sin:* Likewiſe one that is much in Self-examination, is a man that can take up the intendment of the rod, and alſo the advantages of it, and ſo is conſtrained patiently to bear the rod in his youth, and to ſit down adoring the unſearchable wiſdom of God, in diſpenſing ſuch things to him. That word *Prov.* 19.3. is oft-times verified of us, *The fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way, his heart fretteth againſt the Lord, i.e.* when he is chaſtened for it. O! But if a Chriſtian were dwelling much at home, he might wonder that he hath (as yet) a being in the world, and is not cut off from the right hand of the *Lord*. O! Bleſs him eternally, that ye are not ſent away to be reſerved in everlaſting chains. 2. This likewiſe doth occaſion diſcontentment under our lot, *viz.* Want of that divine and neceſſary preparation to meet with every lot that can befal us before it come. We think a Chriſtian ought to be general in his reſolutions to bear every croſs that *Chriſt* will cut out unto him. And certainly, There are theſe *two* Advantages that a Chriſtian hath of general and univerſal Reſolutions. *Firſt*, He hath this advantage, That when he is chaſtened, as it were, in his goods, or any other thing that belongeth o him,

him, he beginneth to ſing a Song of Praiſe, becauſe it is not worſe with him: There can no lot befal a man who is univerſal in his Reſolutions, but he will have a Song of Praiſe unto God, becauſe of this. *Secondly*, He hath this Advantage, *viz.* Foreſight and Reſolution to meet with any croſs doth exceedingly diſpoſe the Chriſtian for bearing it well: We conceive that this hath had great influence on *Job*'s patience, Job 3. 25. *For the thing which I greatly feard is come upon me:* But our Afflictions do oft-times ſurprize us, and ſo *We faint in the day of Adverſity, and prove thereby our ſtrength tobe but ſmall.* 3. This alſo occaſioneth our Diſcontentment, and it is this, Little Heavenly-mindedneſs in a Chriſtian, when he meeteth with his Rod: O! But a Chriſtian ſitting down upon mount *Piſgah*, to behold that Promiſed Land, might with patience bear his rod; as is clear, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. compared with *verſ.* 17. where *Paul* giveth this reaſon of his courage and conſtancy under his rod: That he had an eye unto thoſe things that were eternal. Did ye never know what ſuch a thing meant, as to drown the thoughts of your preſent miſery, in theſe precious depths of Eternity, beholding ſo much in Heaven, as infinitly to ſolace you; yea, and to make up all your loſſes here? I confeſs that opinion of the *Stoicks*, that did commend *Apathie*, and want of Paſſions unto men, that they ſhould not be much moved with grief for the want of any thing; nor be moved with joy for the having or poſſeſſing of any thing, is in ſome ſenſe good: Hence in ſome ſenſe they ſpoke divinely, *Nihil boni vel mali accidit homini, niſi bonus vel malus animus*; There is no evil nor good that befalleth man, but only a good or evil mind: If the Heart was in a divine and ſpiritual frame, they knew not what any other ſad or anxious lot could do unto them. 4. There is this likewiſe which occaſioneth diſcontent, and it is this, The want of the taking up *God* as the cauſe &author of thoſe ſad ſinleſs evils which befal us; which if but once believed, we ſhould be aſhamed to diſpute and murmure ſo much as we do: this is clear, 1 *Sam.* 3. near the cloſe, that word of *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do*

who it ſeemeth him good: and Pſal. 39.9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth*, and this reaſon is given of it, *Becauſe thou didſt it*; and Iſai. 39. 8. *Good is the word of the Lord.* Certainly the murmurings and repinings of our Hearts, do ſpeak that groſs *Atheiſm* that dwelleth within us: O! If we believed this, durſt we debate with Him who is *Almighty*, or put him to render an accompt of his ways, who is that *Supreme and Abſolute One?* Is it fit to be ſaid to ſuch a *Prince* as he is, Thou art ungodly, and to condemn him who is moſt juſt? O! Be much in the ſtudy of the Soveraignty of *God*, when He, as it were, doth call as in a ſolemn Aſſembly, all your terrors round about you. 5. This likewiſe doth occaſion it, *viz.* Our little being in the Meditation and ſerious Thoughts of the brevity of our Life, and of Time: If a man knew that it were but for an hour, or for ten days, that he were to endure Tribulation, he might patiently ſubmit, and bear with his Rod: as is clear, 1 *Cor.*7.29. compared with the following Verſes, where from that Doctrine, That Time was ſhort, he doth infer this Exhortation, *Let thoſe that weep, be as though they weeped not*; as if he had ſaid, Let them not be much moved with thoſe things, time, time will have a cloſe: Believe me, It is not long before the ſmall period of time (that hath interveened betwixt Eternity before, and Eternity after) ſhall be ſweetly ſwallowed up, and there ſhall be nothing but Eternity. 6. and *Laſtly*, This doth occaſion our great Diſcontent under our Rod; *viz.* Unmortifiedneſs and Unſubduedneſs of Spirit: Pride being the great predominant Evil, and if we may allude to that word, *Only by Pride cometh Contention*; we may certainly ſay it holdeth well here, That only by Pride are theſe contendings that we have with *God*, concerning his diſpenſations towards us. In ſumme, It is impoſſible for a Chriſtian not humbled, to be content: Pride is one of the greateſt oppoſites unto divine Contentment under any Rod that we meet with: O! But if a Chriſtian were humble, he might ſit in the duſt, and ſweetly adore the infinit Love and Patience of *God*.

2. Now

2. Now we ſhall in the *Second* place propoſe ſome Conſiderations, that may keep a Chriſtian from being diſcontent with any lot that doth befal him; and the firſt is this, That there are many ſad and woful companions of a Chriſtians diſcontentment and repining againſt any diſpenſation of *God*: And we conceive there is 1. this bad companion, that a Chriſtian hereby is indiſpoſed and unfitted to go about Spiritual Duties, eſpecially of *Prayer* and *Praiſe*: It is impoſſible for a Chriſtian that is under the Diſeaſe of Diſcontent, to pray or praiſe; There is ſomewhat of this pointed at, 1 *Tim.* 2.8. where this is a qualification of a right Prayer, That he ſhould be without wrath, not having any murmurings or repinings within his heart: as likewiſe it is clear concerning Praiſe, Pſal. 57. 7. *My heart is fixed, it is fixed,* which ſpeaketh ſo much as this, That Praiſe doth require a divine and compoſed frame of Spirit: And it is moſt certain, that Diſcontentment doth impede Prayer, for there are *three* ſweet ingredients of the Exerciſe of Prayer, which Diſcontent doth exceedingly cut off; there is Love, Fervency, and Faith; which no doubt Diſcontentment doth abridg: A diſcontented Chriſtian cannot be a Chriſtian burning with Love: Jealouſie is ſuch a predominant with him, that Love cannot be his exerciſe. And certainly, if Prayer do not proceed from the precious Principle of Love, it wants that one arme which it ought to have. 2. Neither can a Chriſtian exerciſe Faith, becauſe he hath now, as it were, taken up ſo bad an opinion of *God*, that he cannot repoſe his confidence nor hope in him: And 3. as for Fervency, they are ſo much in poring upon their preſent lot, that they can as it were, be fervent about nothing, but only for removal of that. It is certain, that let a Chriſtian examine himſelf, There is nothing that cuts the neck of Prayer ſo much as Diſcontent: In a manner, the ſpirit is turned brutiſh, being uncompoſed for any ſpiritual Converſe with *God*. 2. There is this bad companion likewiſe which accompanieth Diſcontentment, we are incapacitat, and rendered altogether unable to reſiſt Temptations, while Diſcontent is in exerciſe. It is impoſ-

ſible for a Chriſtian to be a Mortifier, or Reſiſter of Luſt, when Diſcontentment is once on foot. And there are theſe two evils, that get moſt marvelous advantage under Diſcontentment, and theſe are, the predominant Luſt of ſuch an one, (be what it will) and Pride; theſe do ſpring up apace. And certainly, all other Luſts do get much victory over ſuch an one: A Chriſtian may looſe more by one Hours diſcontent under a Croſs, than he can regain in many Months, yea on this ſide of Eternity: And it is no wonder that Temptations do prevail upon ſuch an one; He is off his watch, and his ſtrength is gone: In a manner their Temptations do ſay, *Their ſtrengeh gone from them, let us go up and put them to flight.* 3. There is this bad companion likewiſe, that doth accompany Diſcontentment, *viz.* Want of Tenderneſs of Spirit. It is moſt certain, that there is nothing that doth cut off Tenderneſs ſo much, as Diſcontentment: For a Chriſtian that is ſuch, is not living under the impreſſion of the Fear, or of the Love of the Almighty, which are the two great Principles of Tenderneſs of Spirit. Certainly, let one examine, and he will find, that by his anxiety and bitterneſs of ſpirit, he hath made his heart to die as a ſtone within him, and hath made his bands ſtrong upon his ſpirit. 4. There is this *laſt* bad Companion of Diſcontentment, *viz.* A Chriſtians undervaluing of all the former Mercies which he hath received: When once a Chriſtian meeteth with that which contradicteth his humour, he loſeth his eſteem of every thing that formerly hath been beſtowed upon him: There is ſomething of this pointed at, *Gen.* 37. *v.* 35. in *Jacobs* impatiency in the loſs of *Joſeph*; where he doth undervalue all mercies beſide: And it is moſt clear in that word, *Eſth.* 5. 12, 13. where, though it be ſpoken of a wicked man, yet by proportion it holdeth of a Chriſtian, that becauſe *Mordecai* did not bow his knee, he cried forth, concerning all his other mercies, *They avail me nothing*; he knew not what it was to put a price upon mercies that he had received; But becauſe this which was the great Luſt of his heart was away, he did undervalue the reſt. And it is

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moſt certain, that there is nothing doth ſo heighten a Chriſtians diſreſpect unto the moſt precious and excellent things of *God*, as this of Diſcontent: And this is one Subtilty and Device of Satan, that a Chriſtian may with greater eaſe, and with leſs Conviction do it: They do ordinarily conſtruct their choiceſt Mercies, as if they were mere Deluſions, and ſo upon that account begin to undervalue and miſprize them.

ult. There is this Conſideration which may move you to wreſtle againſt Diſcontenment, It is a Character and mark diſtinguiſhing a Chriſtian from a Reprobate. I would have Murmurers ſeriouſly to meditate upon that ſad word, *Jude* 16. verſ. compared with verſ. 15. where ſpeaking of Chriſt's coming to judge and to execute vengeance, the firſt put in the roll, *are Murmurers and Complainers:* And that word, 1 *Cor.* 10.10. *Be not Murmurers, as many of them were, and were deſtroyed by the deſtroyer:* And certainly, It is no wonder that Murmuring paſs under ſo bad a notion, not only becauſe it is indeed that Sin, which ſpeaketh out our Atheiſm moſt; but becauſe it is that Sin which doth moſt declare a Chriſtian's deſire to be independent, and not in ſubjection unto *God*. In a manner, ſuch is the woful ambition of our ſpirits, that we deſire not to depend upon him, but that we have our own lot in our own hand, to carve it out unto our ſelves. O! *We* know not what it is to give Chriſt a Negative Voice in the diſpenſations that do befal us: We love to be co-ordinat to *God*, and not ſubordinat to him. O put a blank in his hand, deſire him to fill it up with what he liketh: Chriſt doth oft-times put a blank in a Chriſtian's hand, as in that word, *What will ye that I ſhould do unto you*, there is *Chriſts* blank, that he doth give us, and though thorow our ignorance we cannot fill it up, yet is it beſt to give it back to himſelf, that he may fill it up, with what he liketh.

3. There is this Conſideration alſo, that may perſuade you to deſiſt from Diſcontentment; *viz.* It is that Sin which doth interrupt the accompliſhment of the Promiſes. As likewiſe it doth interrupt the Exerciſe of Faith upon

upon the Promiſes; as is clear, *Num.* 14. 27. compared with 28. where they were cut ſhort off that promiſe given them of entering into the Land of *Canaan*, becauſe of their murmuring: and it doth interrupt the Exerciſe of Faith upon the Promiſes, as is clear, *Pſal.* 106. 24. compared with *verſ.* 25, where it is ſaid, *They believed not his word*, and the ground of it is given, *for they were murmurers:* And it is no wonder that murmuring interrupt the Exerciſe of Faith upon the Promiſes; For it is impoſſible for a Murmurer either to have the Faith of the Omnipotency of *God*, or of his Goodneſs, or of his Love, which are the precious Pillars of Faith, upon which it muſt build it ſelf: O! But theſe that begin once to debate with him, do quickly put Faith out of exerciſe. And I would have you to know this, That there is a Diſcontentment of Judgment, and a Diſcontentment of the Will and Affections: And oft-times a Chriſtian will win over the diſcontentment of Judgment and Reaſon, when he cannot mortifie the diſcontentment of his Will and Affections; For the Soveraignty of *God*, and the Sinfulneſs of our Nature, may ſilence our Reaſon: But, no doubt, it muſt be his own immediat hand, that muſt ſilence the murmurings of our Will; as is clear, *Pſal.* 42. 5. where *David* is convinced of the unreaſonableneſs of his Diſcontent, and yet he is forced to debate with his Will concerning the quitting of it. *Why art thou caſt down?*

4. There is this Conſideration likewiſe, which may provoke you to deſiſt from Diſcontentment under your lot: It is a moſt unreaſonable evil for a Chriſtian to be diſcontent: For as *Chriſt* ſpeaketh, *Matth.* 6. 27. What profit have you by taking thought? Can you adde one cubit to your ſtature? O, It is a poor thing, when a man hath loſt his goods, to loſe his patience alſo: What a poor revenge is that which a man taketh of himſelf? And certainly, the unreaſonableneſs of Impatience under the Rod, doth not only appear in this, that it hindereth and interrupteth your ſeeing of any Mercy that is in the Rod, it being impoſſible for a diſcontented one to obſerve mercy in his ſtroke; But alſo that Impatience is the compendi-

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ous way, for the prolongation of your ſtrait, and the involving of you in greater miſeries and thraldoms; As likewiſe, Impatience doth heighten and increaſe the cauſe of your bondage, and multiplieth your Iniquities. O! But it is a ſweet and excellent ſtudy for a Chriſtian to endeavour patience under every lot! And, in a manner, when we cannot read love in his Hand, nor in his Face, becauſe of his frowns and ſtrokes; yet by faith to draw aſide the Vail, and read love in his Heart, and cry forth, *I know the thoughts of his heart, that they are thoughts of peace, and not of evil:* Certainly it is through Diſcontentment, that we cry forth, *Though his words be as ſoft as oyl and butter, yet war is in his heart*; We do charge him with contradictions, betwixt his profeſſion and his purpoſes.

5. And there is this Conſideration likewiſe, which may deter you from Diſcontentment; which is this, It is impoſſible for a Chriſtian to profit by his Rod, while he is diſcontent: All the time a Chriſtian is under the fit of Impatience, he ſpendeth his time moſt prodigally, not imploying it, for promoving that which is the great deſign of the Rod, *to take away Sin*; but ſtudying to involve himſelf in greater Captivity and Bondage, and to ſubject himſelf under the hand of his Iniquities. O! that ye might be perſuaded to exerciſe more divine Contentment under your lot, and that ye might be more exerciſed in contemplating and beholding thoſe precious and excellent things that are above. That is a moſt remarkable word which *Jacob* had to *Eſau*, Gen. 33. 11. *I have enough:* the word in the Original is this, *I have all:* And as Criticks do obſerve, that word which *Eſau* had in the 8. *verſ. I have enough*, is not that which *Jacob* hath in the 11. *verſ. I have enough*; That though *Jacob* was a poorer man than *Eſau*, yet *he had all:* Such a Chriſtian as hath *Chriſt* for his portion, may ſweetly ſing, Though I be poor, yet do I poſſeſs all things, *As having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things*; *as ſorrowing, yet always rejoycing*; *as poor, and yet behold we are rich.* It is not long before that day ſhall come, *when Chriſt ſhall make up his Jewels,*

Jewels, when there ſhall be a clear and moſt palpable difference made *betwixt the precious and the vile*: Behold he is upon his way, therefore do not murmur nor repine. A Chriſtian muſt not expect two Heavens, it is enough if he poſſeſs one; We muſt not travel to Heaven thorow a Bed of Roſes: It matters not though we go to Heaven in a fiery Chariot, having Afflictions and Calamities as our Companions all along our way: When our feet ſhall be paſſing thorow the threſhold of the door of our everlaſting Reſt, then all our chains ſhall fall from our hands, & our fetters from our feet, then may we lift up our heads with joy and rejoycing. O! But when thoſe Heavens, which you now behold, ſhall be rolled up as a Scroll; When thoſe two great Vails, the viſible Vail of the Heavens, and the inviſible Vail of Iniquity ſhall be rent from the top to the bottom, and we ſhall have moſt clear and precious Diſcoveries *of that noble plant of renown*, we ſhall then ſit down at the Well-head, and drink, and forget our Miſery, and remember our Poverty no more: O! Let Hope evaniſh unto fruition, and Faith unto poſſeſſion, and let Time ſweetly evaniſh into Eternity.

SERMON X.

Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.*

IT is an ordinary and uſual Error and Deluſion amongſt Chriſtians, That they place the Exerciſe of Religion in theſe Duties that are more ſublime and high unto their apprehenſion, as Faith, Hope, and Prayer; But undervalue the Exerciſe of theſe lower Duties, as Contentment, Mortification to the World, and Charity to the Poor, as not being ſo eſſentially neceſſary for the being of a Chriſtian. I am perſuaded, that if any of you had been

been a Hearer of the Apoſtle *James*, when he was diſcourſing upon that divine Subject, wherein pure Religion and undefiled doth conſiſt, no doubt, ye would have imagined, that he would have brought forth ſome divine and profound thing, in the exerciſe of which, pure Religion before *God and the Father* conſiſteth: But believe me, Religion doth more conſiſt in Practice, than in Speculation; and more in Obedience, than in refined Notions: What conceive ye of ſuch a definition of pure Religion and undefiled, as that which is, Jam. 1. 27. *Pure Religion and undefiled* doth conſiſt in Mortfication to the World, and in Charity to the Poor, in theſe two low undervalued Duties, And this may further ingratiate and commend the exerciſe of theſe low and undervalued Duties, that in the Day when *Chriſt* ſhall appear to judge the quick and the dead, the ground of the approbation of the Saints ſhall be founded upon this low and contemptible Duty, *Charity to the Poor*; for this is the ground which is given of that eternal Bleſſedneſs; which approbation of *Jeſus Chriſt*, no doubt, is a confirmation of *James* his Doctrine: And that which ſhall be the ground of the reprobation of the wicked, ſhall be *want of Charity to the Poor, and viſiting of the Fatherleſs*: And believe me, in the exerciſe of this Divine quality of Chriſtian-contentment, not a little of Religion doth conſiſt: *Paul* ſaith, *Godlineſs with contentment is great gain.* It is by Faith, that a Chriſtian enjoyeth *God*, It is by Love that he enjoyeth his Neighbour, and by Contentment that He enjoyeth himſelf. We confeſs, It is a moſt myſterious and difficult Leſſon for a Chriſtian, in each lot he is placed in, to be crying forth, *It is good for me to be here, let me make a tabernacle here.* Ordinarily we have ſtrong deſires to have the cutting out of our own lot. *Solomon* maketh mention *of three things, that are not ſatisfied, and of four things that never ſay it is enough; the grave, the barren womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and the fire.* And we may add unto theſe *four*, this one *fifth*, The moſt part of men who are unſatisfied in their lot: It is no wonder that men unlimited

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in their deſires, meet with great diſappointments; For thoſe that have exorbitant and *eccentrick* deſires, muſt have great hopes, as alſo great diſappointments: Therefore it were certainly your advantage, to be ſtudying to *compendize* and abridg your deſires after theſe things that are here below: For as one ſpoke well, who ſaid, He conceived that the greateſt riches of a man did conſiſt in Poverty of deſires, and in being content with that lot, wherein *God* had placed him. There are only theſe *three* things that befal a Chriſtian, under which it is a great difficulty for him to attain to Contentment; 1. There is the loſs of his predominant Luſt and Idol, eſpecially if it be any whit refined and vailed under the vail and vizard of any vertue, as if one be given unto the ſeeking of the applauſe of the world, there is nothing under which there is ſo great a difficulty to exerciſe Contentment, as in the loſing of that applauſe; our heart oft-times crys out, for, *They have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* And certainly oft-times our luſts die unto us, before we die unto them, which is the occaſion that our living Luſts do ſit down, and lament over the graves of our buried Idols, wiſhing that they may awake, and ſtand up from the dead. And we ſhall only ſay to ſuch, *Wo to you, when all men ſhall ſpeak well of you*, this may hinder people from purſuing after that Idol; but more eſpecially that word, Joh. 5.44. *How can ye believe, that ſeek glory one of another*; which words ſeem to import an inconſiſtency betwixt the exerciſe of Faith, and a purſuit after Idols. 2. This likewiſe befalleth a Chriſtian, under which it is a great difficulty for him to attain to Contentment, and that is, The continuance and lengthening forth of any affliction that doth befal him: Oft-times a Chriſtian, when firſt he meeteth with his Croſs, will ſalute and embrace it, and will cry out, *This is a grief, and I muſt bear it*: But when the thread of our Affliction is ſpun out unto any length, then we begin to be diſcontent, and to cry out, *Haſt thou found me, O thou mine enemy?* This was clear in the exerciſe of *Job*, who when firſt he met with his croſs, did expreſs divine Contentment in a moſt eminent

eminent way, crying forth, *Bleſſed be the name of the Lord*; O! But when he was made to poſſeſs months of Vanity, and wearisome Nights were appointed for him, then he cryeth forth, *I chooſe ſtrangling and death, rather than life.* And we ſhall only ſay to ſuch, be much in the meditation of that precious and immenſe hope laid up for you, go up to the top of Mount *Piſgah*, and there be with *Moſes* in the viewing of that Land which is afar off. And ſtudy likewiſe to ſeal that divine Concluſion, *That he doth all things well.* 3. There is this which befalleth a Chriſtian, under which he hath great difficulty to exerciſe Contentment, which is, Poverty and Want in the world. *Solomon* who was well acquainted with his own heart, and knew well his unſuitableneſs to bear ſuch a croſs, cryeth forth, Prov. 30. 8,9. *Give me not Poverty, leſt I ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain.* It is certain that to exerciſe Faith upon *God*, for the receipt of common Mercies, is more difficult, than to exerciſe Faith on *God* for our eternal Salvation, and for our intereſt in *Jeſus Chriſt.* And we conceive, That the reaſon why a Chriſtian findeth greater difficulty, to exerciſe Faith upon *God*, for the receipt of theſe common Mercies, than for the receiving of that cardinal and unſpeakable Mercy, *Salvation through Jeſus Chriſt*, to be either this: that Faith, when it is exerciſed upon the one, moſt ſimply and immediatly relyeth upon the Omnipotency and Faithfulneſs of *God*, abſtracted from all other props and conſiderations, for there, Senſe and Reaſon do contradict the exerciſe of Faith; But when Chriſtians do exerciſe Faith upon *God* for Righteouſneſs and Salvation, they ordinarily have either ſomewhat of Senſe, or ſomewhat of holy Reaſon, that doth under-prop and help their Faith. And this likewiſe is the occaſion of it, that not ſo ordinarily a Chriſtian is put to the exerciſe of the one, as unto the exerciſe of the other: But believe me, It is no ſmall difficulty for a Chriſtian to act confidence upon *God*, when he is redacted unto a low and pinching eſtate in the world. And we ſhall only ſay to ſuch who murmur and repine under ſuch an eſtate; caſt your eyes upon Him

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who was the Heir of all things, of whom it is recorded, *That he had not so much as where to lay his head.* As likewise, cast your eyes upon a number of that precious cloud of Witnesses, who are now entered into the everlasting possession of that precious and excellent lot, who were constrained to wander in dens and caves of the earth, having sheep's and goat-skins for their cloathing. Ye are now in the estate of your Minority, and therefore ye are rich only in hope and expectation, and so may dispense, though ye be not rich in possession; though we may say, a Christian that hath *Him who is all in all*, must of necessity enjoy all and all.

Now that which we shall speak to upon this divine quality of Contentment, (besides these things which we spoke at the last occasion) shall be to point out a little, the difficulty of attaining unto Contentment under every lot and estate that befalleth a Christian. (1.) The difficulty is fully shewed in that word, *I have learned*, as it were, it speaketh so much as this, once *Paul* was an Ignorant of this mysterious Lesson of Divine Contentment, but now he is instructed by him, who is that Prince of Pastors, by whom he did attain to the knowledg of this: And this speaketh forth the difficulty of it, that a Christian must be much in Self-examination, and Self-searching before he can attain unto Contentment: There is somewhat of this pointed at, Psal. 4.4. *Examine your selves upon your Beds*, and there is a Promise, by way of caution, annexed to this, *And ye shall be still, or be still*: And the influence that Self-examination hath upon this Divine quality of Contentment, may not only appear in this, That a Christian, who is much in reflecting upon himself observeth ordinarily a suitableness betwixt the cross and his humour, as it were, he seeth infinit wisdome shining, in cutting out such a lot and dispensation unto him; and so is constrained to adore the unsearchable riches of the Wisdom of *God*: As likewise, its influence may appear in this, That a Christian, who is much in Self-examination, doth behold such spots and blemishes in himself, that he is forced to wonder, that it is not worse with

with him, and so is constrained *to glorifie God in the fire.* I confess, it may be a wonder, that this is not a wonder unto a Christian every day, that he is not consumed, and cut off from his hand. O! that ye would once be much in the study of your selves: That ancient advice of a Heathen, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, *Know thy self*, were worthy to be practised by all Christians; We are too much roving abroad, and too little at home. It is reported of some Beasts, that they have eyes to see abroad, but have no eyes to see at home; which no doubt is the case and exercise of the most part who live in these days.

This likewise pointeth forth the Difficulty of attaining to this Duty of Contentment, that a Christian before he can attain it, must be much in the exercise of these two cardinal Graces, *Faith* and *Love*; Certainly, till once we be studying the Exercise of these, Contentment will be at a low and weak standing with us: And no doubt, the exercise of Faith, not only in concluding our interest in *Jesus Christ*, and in sealing that Conclusion, that *He is ours*, is most necessary for attaining to Contentment; but likewise the exercise of Faith for attaining of Contentment may appear in this, That Faith is that Grace which is the best interpreter of the dispensations of God: This may be recorded to the commendation of the Grace of Faith, that it knoweth not, what it is to bring up a bad report upon *God*. And certainly as long as we consult with these *three* bad counsellors, Sense, Reason, and Unbelief, about the dispensations of *God*; this will be the result of that counsel, to have sorrow in your heart dayly: O study to employ that wise counsellor *Faith*, which sometimes, because it is so intelligent a Grace, is called *Understanding*, *Col.* 2. 2. Now this is clear, that Faith hath influence upon Contentment, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. where *David* from this, that *God had made with him an everlasting Covenant*, cryeth out, I am not much anxious, though other things should fail, *and though my house be not so with God.* As likewise it is clear, *Psal.* 142. 4, 5. where the exercise of Faith upon this, *That God was his portion*, made him with patience

to ſubmit, *Though all refuge ſhould fail him*, and *though none upon his right hand, or upon his left hand, ſhould care for his ſoul*; As likewiſe *Pſal.* 37. 1. compared with *verſ.* 3. where he preſſeth that Duty of truſting in *God*, by which one might obviat the evil of Diſcontent and fretting. 2. Love no doubt, muſt likewiſe be exerciſed, before a Chriſtian can attain unto this divine quality of Contentment: There are theſe *two* precious Properties which are given of Love, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. *Love endureth long, and Love thinketh no evil*; which, no doubt, have great influence upon Contentment; We confeſs Love ſometimes is the moſt impatient Grace of a Chriſtian, and ſometimes the moſt patient Grace of a Chriſtian; in a manner, Love when it is in its moſt vigorous exerciſe, will endure more ſad afflictions than Faith: Faith ſometimes will be languiſhing and giving over, when Love will ſupport and ſtrengthen it, it being afraid to ſeal that woful concluſion, *That he is not ours*; Love knoweth not what it is to entertain jealous thoughts of him who is beloved, *it thinketh no evil*. And certainly, when the Grace of Love is in its vigorous exerciſe, it is moſt tender to act any thing, by which the perſon that is loved may be wronged, or a bad report brought up upon him. A Chriſtian that is united unto precious *Chriſt*, by that golden and inviſible chain of his Beauty, and tranſcendent Excellency, can with patience endure the loſs of all things beſides *Chriſt*; Love is peremptory in nothing but in this, the enjoyment of the beloved: And Love is ſorrowful for nothing but for the loſs of him who is beloved: he moveth in ſo high a ſphere, & is ſo far elevate above all things that are here below, that in a manner, he poſſeſſeth his Soul in patience in the midſt of thoſe Revolutions and Changes that are here below; In a manner, the Grace of Love doth incorporate a Chriſtian in *Jeſus Chriſt*, and doth make him to dwell in Chriſt as his Manſion and Houſe, and ſo he is not much taken up with thoſe things that are abroad.

The e is this likewiſe, which ſpeaketh forth the Difficulty of attaining unto Divine Contentment, and it is this;

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A Chriſtian muſt be much in the exerciſe of the Grace of Mortification to all theſe paſſing and tranſient Vanities of the World; Do not theſe riſings and murmurings of ſpirit ſpeak out little exerciſe of Mortification to be amongſt us? For if we were once mortified to the world, we ſhould then exerciſe Contentment under every lot; as will be clear, if ye compare theſe two places, *Pſal.* 119. 29. where *David* ſaith, *I have ſeen an end of all perfection*, which doth imply that he had a diſtinct diſcovery of the Vanity of the world: In a manner, he had it brought within his ſight, which is one of the moſt unerring ſenſes: compare this with that moſt remarkable place; which breaths forth much of Divine Contentment in him, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25, 26. where he ſaith, *But if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do unto me, as ſeemeth good unto him.* Here, in a manner, is *David* making a reſignation of his Crown, and ſeeing an end of the perfection of that gliſtering and paſſing vanity. As likewiſe it may appear from the paralleling of theſe *two* places, *Gal.* 6. 14, Where *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, *I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me*; in a manner, *Paul* and the world made a ſorrowleſs parting, as two dead men parting one from another; with the words of our Text, where he breatheth forth this divine quality of Contentment. I think certainly, a Chriſtian reflecting upon the changeableneſs, inconſtancy and vexation of things here below, will not be much moved with the loſs of them. It was upon this ground that Heathens did attain unto ſuch a meaſure of Contentment; For they conſidered, that Fear and Deſire were *two* inſeparable companions of thoſe that had moſt of theſe fancied-delights of the world; for even thoſe that have the greateſt abundance, are vexed betwixt theſe *two* Paſſions, *Fear* and *Deſire*: Fear to loſe what they have attained, and Deſire to attain more. We conceive, that it is a remarkable thing that is recorded of *Seſoſtris* King of *Egypt*, who was ſo ambitious, that he would needs have his Chariot drawn with *four* Kings, and he obſerving that *one* of theſe *four* Kings did keep his eye ſtill fixed upon the

motion of the wheel of the Chariot, did ask him the ground why he did so? And he did most fitly reply, it putteth me in mind of the mutability and changeableness of the things of the world; For, saith he, the highest part of the wheel is instantly the lowest part, and the lowest part of the wheel is instantly the highest; which moved that ambitious Prince to desist from so ambitious a practice: And believe me, if ye would read that Inscription upon the forehead of all things, *Vanity and vexation of spirit*, ye might easily attain unto Contentment.

There is this *Fourthly* which speaketh forth the Difficulty of attaining unto Contentment, that a Christian, before he win to it, must necessarily be mortified unto that innate and connatural Idol of Pride: Pride must be once brought low, before Contentment can be attained. We conceive Discontent and Pride have sworn a covenant of agreement, that they shall be together in their life, and undivided in death, they are chained together by an unchangeable chain of amity: And believe me, It is impossible for a Christian to be discontent, but he must of necessity be proud: And upon the contrary, a Christian that is proud, he must of necessity be a discontented one. For there is nothing that is the mother of Contentment so much, as Humility, which moveth a Christian silently *to bear his yoke, and to sit down*, and *put his mouth in the dust*, because God hath done it. In a manner, an humbled one, that hath distinct knowledg of his own baseness, knoweth not what it is to cry forth, *Why am I thus?* Such an one is much in admiration, and little in murmuring; much in praise, and little in complaint.

There is this *Lastly*, which pointeth forth the Difficulty of it, a Christian cannot win to Contentment, without he be much in Heavenly-mindedness, and be in a Spiritual and Heavenly frame. There is somewhat of this pointed at, *Joh.* 14. 1. compared with the 2. *vers.* where *Christ* proposing a remedy unto the discontentment of the Disciples, *That their souls should not be troubled*, He doth begin a discourse of Heaven, *That in his Fathers house were many mansions*, and that they had

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an intereſt therein. As likewiſe there is ſomewhat of this pointed at, *Matth.* 6. 25, 26. where to obviat their taking thought what they ſhould eat, or what they ſhould drink, or wherewith they ſhould be clothed, he deſireth them *to ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God.* And certainly one that is much taken up in the Contemplation of eternal Life, and who is viewing theſe precious and endleſs Delights that are at his right hand, will move in a moſt compoſed and divine frame; in a manner, he drowneth the thoughts of his preſent miſeries, in thoſe precious depths of Eternity; he knoweth that one moment of the enjoyment of precious *Chriſt*, ſhall fully recompenſe and make up all thoſe ſorrows he hath met with. I know not what ſhall be the thoughts of Chriſtians, when that Volume of the mercies of the *Lord*, which they have met with here below ſhall be preſented unto them. O! how may they be filled with admiration, to ſee that Book written within and without of the receipts of moſt ſingular and precious demonſtrations of his Love!

Now in the *Second* place to provoke you to purſue after this Divine quality, we ſhall ſpeak of theſe Advantages that a Chriſtian hath by exerciſing Contentment under every lot: We conceive, it is ſo excellent a Grace, that it is indeed a compound of theſe five Graces, Faith, Humility, Patience, Hope, and Mortification; in a manner, Contentment is the reſult of all theſe Graces, exerciſing themſelves in one; and except all thoſe be in a moſt vigorous exerciſe, that abſolute Contentment is not eaſily to be attained: But no doubt, it muſt be an excellent thing that deriveth its pedigree and deſcent from ſo high and excellent things, as are thoſe precious Graces of the Spirit. 1. But the *firſt* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by divine Contentment, under his ſaddeſt lot, is this; it doth advance him unto moſt nigh Fellowſhip and Correſpondence with *God*; as likewiſe a contented one receiveth moſt ſweet manifeſtations of the Preſence and Fellowſhip of *God* with him under his croſs: It is moſt certain, that Contentment when attained, is ordinarily accompanied with moſt nearneſs and correſpondence with

Him: There is ſomewhat of this pointed at, *Heb.* 13. 5. Where preſſing that Doctrine of Contentment, he ſaith, *The Lord will not leave you nor forſake you*; which, though we confeſs to be principally underſtood of his Providence, yet it may include the manifeſtations of his Preſence: as likewiſe that in *Jam.* 4. 7. *Humble your ſelves under his hand*, which he is preſſing from this Duty of Contentment, *and he ſhall lift you up*: And no doubt, that Invitation doth oft-times come to a contented Chriſtian, *Come with me from Lebanon, look from Amana, and from the top of Shenir, and from the mount Lebanon*, Cant. 4. 8. *Chriſt* loveth to dwell with one that walketh in a compoſed, ſilent, and retired frame of Spirit: And the reaſon why a contented Chriſtian enjoyeth much of God under his Croſs, is becauſe he is much in Prayer: It is impoſſible for a diſcontented Chriſtian to pray to any purpoſe under his Croſs, for he wanteth that Divine qualification that is required in Prayer, *To lift up his hands without wrath*; the Soul is in ſuch a confuſed and diſtempered frame, *It is ſo troubled that it cannot ſpeak*; this is clear, *Pſal.* 77. 4. or 5. *ver.* where the *Pſalmiſt* had this diſadvantage by his Diſcontent, *I am ſo troubled*, (ſaith he) *that I cannot ſpeak*: Though we conceive that there is that which is imitable in him in that caſe, *viz.* That a Chriſtian, when he cannot ſpeak, he may make this Prayer, *I am ſo troubled, that I cannot ſpeak*, which was his practice in that *Pſalm.*

There is this *Second* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by the exerciſe of divine Contentment; *viz.* He profits by his Croſs: But the want of Contentment doth exceedingly obſtruct and hinder a Chriſtians improving of the croſs for his advantage: For a Chriſtian that is diſcontent, cannot receive any advantage by his Croſs; there is ſomewhat of this pointed, *Heb.* 12. 11. where the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs flow to a Chriſtian that is exerciſed under his Croſs, which no doubt doth take in the divine quality of Contentment. There are theſe *three* precious Advantages, that a Chriſtian may have by his Croſs, which Diſcontent doth exceedingly obſtruct;

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There is the exerciſe of Humility, the exerciſe of Prayer, and the exerciſe of Mortification: 1. One that is diſcontent, doth obſtruct that great advantage of the croſs, even Humility; he is ſo much in repining againſt the diſpenſation of *God*, that he cannot at all ſit down, and fold his feet, and quietly bear his yoke. O! How much divine Humility doth Contentment include in its boſome? In a manner, a Chriſtian, when he is content, is clothed with it; but Diſcontentment is the mother of Pride, and doth add fuel unto that fire. 2. Diſcontent doth likewiſe obſtruct Mortification and Conformity with *God*, which is the precious end of the Croſs, *He doth chaſtiſe us, that we may be partakers of his Holineſs:* And this is the fruit of all theſe things, *To take away your ſin.* And certainly, a diſcontented Chriſtian cannot be taken up in Mortification; Yea, it is moſt certain, that a Chriſtian may loſe more by one Hours diſcontent, than he can gain in many Days, yea on this ſide of Eternity; O! to what a length may Diſcontent lead one? 3. Likewiſe it doth obſtruct the exerciſe of Prayer, which is another precious end of the Croſs, *In their affliction they will ſeek me early, and when thy chaſtening hand is upon them, they will then pour forth their Prayers unto thee:* But one that is in a diſtempered and diſcontented frame, is incapacitate to go about this duty of Prayer, he is ſo much in converſing with his Croſs, that he cannot be much in converſing with *God:* And that is certainly a great defect in a Chriſtian, when he is more taken up in ſtudying the diſadvantages of the Croſs, than in ſtudying the advantages of it; moſt of us prove Orators, like *Cicero*, in declaiming our calamities, and in ſetting them forth to the full, (as *Job* proved a moſt *elegant* Orator in ſetting forth his calamities;) But in the exerciſe of Praiſe, our Tongues ſtick to the roof of our Mouth, and we are ſilent unto *God*.

There is this *Third* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by the exerciſe of Contentment, it doth obviat and obſtruct many Temptations, that one is lyable unto by his Diſcontentment. I know not any Sin in Scripture, that

hath produced ſuch bad and woful effects, as that Sin of Diſcontentment: What made *Achitophel* to ſeek a cord, and to hang himſelf, was it not his Diſcontent? Diſcontent is the mother of moſt ſad and deſperat reſolutions; For they cannot ſubmit unto their croſs, and therefore ſtudy to extricat themſelves out of it, by entring and involving themſelves into that endleſs and unſupportable croſs. Therefore we would deſire you under your Afflictions to ſtudy Contentment. O! What *atheiſtical* thoughts will lodg in the boſome of one that is diſcontented, we may ſee ſuch clearly in the practice of *Aſaph*, who cryed forth under his Diſcontentment, *I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency.* Certainly there is nothing that will occaſion the want of the faith of the exiſtence of a Deity, and that there is not a *God*, ſo much as this of Diſcontentment.

There is this *Fourth* Advantage that a Chriſtian hath by his Contentment, it maketh the Croſs moſt eaſie to him: Would you know what is the greateſt ingredient of the heavineſs of any croſs, it is Diſcontent: It is certain, that by it we make our chain more heavy and unſupportable upon our necks; whereas if we were ſtudying this Divine quality of Contentment, it ſhould abate much of the bitterneſs of the Croſs: We may ſay, one that hath attained to Contentment, may cry forth, *The bitterneſs of death is paſt*; and may thus triumph over his Croſs, *O Croſs where is thy ſting, and O Affliction where is thy victory?* Certainly, Diſcontent is that which maketh us to ſit down, and cry out, *My ſtroke is heavier than my groaning.* O! Did you never know what it was to bear your Affliction with much inward joy and peace of mind, when you had this Grace of Contentment? No doubt you have.

There is this *Fifth* Advantage likewiſe that a Chriſtian hath by exerciſing Contentment under his Croſs; *viz.* It is a compendious way for him to get free of it. Would you know what is the moſt compendious way, to have the thread of your Affliction ſpun out long? It's to ſtudy Diſcontentment. But would you know what is the moſt

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ſpiritual and compendious way to have the rod taken off, and to have *God* no more to turn away his Face? Then ſtudy Contentment: In a manner, the Croſs hath obtained the end and errand why it was ſent, when you do attain to Contentment and Humility under it. We may ſay of the Sin of Diſcontent, that it is a moſt irrational and reaſonleſs Sin, for thou canſt not by thy Diſcontent extricate thy ſelf out of thy calamities; All the advantage that thou haſt by it is this, it makes thy bonds ſtronger upon thy ſpirit, and maketh thy fetters and chains to ly more heavy upon thee.

There is this *Sixth* Advantage likewiſe that a Chriſtian hath by the exerciſe of Contentment under every Rod, *viz.* Contentedneſs is that divine quality of the Soul, by which a Chriſtian doth beſt attain to much Mortification unto the pleaſures and vanities of the World. O! How ſweetly will a contented Chriſtian, under the loſs of things here below, ſpeak to the diſpraiſe of theſe fancied images? O! It is a poor ſight, to behold a living ſubſtance tyed unto ſhadows by theſe *two* iron chains of *Love* and *Delight*. Ought we not to ſtudy ſo much holy Ambition and ſpiritual Generoſity, as to undervalue all things that are below *God*, as being below us? In a manner, as *Jonadab* ſpoke to *Amnon*, 2 Sam. 13.4. *Why art thou, being a Kings Son, lean from day to day?* We may likewiſe beſpeak the Heirs of the Promiſe, and thoſe that are begotten by a lively Hope, Why, being the Children of him who is the King of Kings, do you wax lean for the loſs or want of thoſe things that are here below? Have you not a Kingdom? And why then ſhould you repine at the loſs of theſe things, which are but paſſing and tranſient Vanities? That which is the great Idol of the world, *Silver and Gold*, what is it but more refined duſt? It is white and yellow clay: And we conceive, that much of the excellency of it doth conſiſt only in the eſtimation of men, who have ſo valued it: But one that hath the aſſurance of Eternal Life, and that *God* is his, may walk thorow the wilderneſs with joy. We confeſs, it is an evil amongſt the Heirs of Promiſe, that they love to go to Heaven

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thorow a moſt eaſie and pleaſant way, they love to walk to that Palace of everlaſting Reſt, thorow a Valley of Roſes; But we muſt not meet with two Heavens, it's ſufficient if we have that one eternal and everlaſting Heaven at laſt. And as for the cauſe of Diſcontent under any calamity that we meet with; we conceive that Pride and want of Mortification are thoſe *two* catholick and general grounds of all our Diſcontent and Impatiency.

We ſhall ſhut up our diſcourſe upon this Divine quality of Contentment, deſiring that men that have abundance of the world, may ſtudy Contentment: Though this may ſeem a *Paradox* unto many, why thoſe that have enough, ſhould yet be deſired to purſue after Contentment. We conceive, there are none more diſcontent, than thoſe that have the greateſt occaſion of Contentment; their deſires are ſo much wedded unto things here below, that that voice is never heard among them, *It is enough*, and *I am ſatisfied:* I conceive, that may fully confute that vain Opinion that Chriſtians and others do entertain, That if they had ſuch a competency of the world, they would be diſcontent no more, but would ſilently ſet on in their way; and that which is the ground of their diſcontent is (as they alledge) the want of a competency of ſubſiſtency: I ſhall only ſay that to you, which is recorded of *Alexander*, who after he had purchaſed the world, was ſo far from attaining to Contentment, that he ſat down and wept, becauſe there was not another world for him to purchaſe. And believe me, this is moſt undeniable, that if you cannot attain to Contentment under your preſent lot, it is impoſſible for you to attain to Contentment when your lot is better; It is only the deluſion of Satan, under which the evil of your Diſcontent is vailed, that maketh you think ſo. But as for thoſe that have abundance of theſe worldly goods, we ſhall preſs this exhortation upon them, Prov. 23.4. *Labour not to be rich*, which is a thing that ye will not eaſily cloſe with, though certainly *Riches* (as he there moſt divinely ſpeaketh) *are a thing that is not.* Now there is a neceſſity of preſſing theſe, who have abundance of the world

world to be content; as is clear, where *Paul* doth ſubjoyn in the following words, *I know* (ſaith he) *how to abound.* People might have imagined, that to be no great Leſſon; But believe me, it is as great, if not greater, than the other, by which we would preſs thoſe that are poor, in each lot and eſtate that befalls them here below to be content; And know this, that the day is coming, when ye ſhall acknowledg infinit Wiſdome in guiding you to Heaven by that way. O! give *Chriſt* a Negative Voice in the diſpenſations of your Lots, and be content to be regulated by Him, *who is that wonderful Counſellor*, and who, though *He lead you by a way that ye know not*, yet take his advice upon an implicite faith, for he knoweth not what it is to diſappoint any Souls expectation that doth ſo. Study Contentment, for that is Heaven brought down to Earth: For what is the Happineſs and Bleſſedneſs of thoſe that are above? It is confined in this one word, *Contentment:* They have now all anxiety, and all loathing, and all deſires ſave one, taken away from them. O! What a life muſt it be to drink of the rivers of theſe Pleaſures? Did you ever know or read of ſuch a River, the waters whereof were *pure Delight and Pleaſure?* When we ſhall ſit down, and be overjoyed with theſe Conſolations that flow from his Face, when we ſhall draw forth that endleſs line of Eternity, in having joy and light flowing in, & admiration and praiſe flowing out, O! how ſweet a life will that be? Believe me, The gleanings of a Chriſtian are better than the vintage of a Reprobate; Yea, *A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked*; for Contentment under a hard Lot, and mean Condition, is a meſſenger of the hope of that more enduring ſubſtance which *Chriſt* ſhall give: And ſeing it is the exerciſe of thoſe that are above, let it alſo be the exerciſe of thoſe that are below, that there may be a ſweet conformity and harmony betwixt the practice of that higher Houſe, and the practice of this lower houſe, that we may have our ſouls united unto him, *who is perfumed with all the powders of the Merchant, and whoſe garments do ſmell*

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of Myrrho and Aloes. Believe this, Time is shortly to have a period, and Eternity is to come. Let each Christian therefore comfort himself in this, Eternity is at hand, when we shall hear that voice, and truth sealed by the Oath of an Angel, *Time shall be no more*: O! Let that precious Day come, and let all other days vanish and pass away.

FINIS.